Peter McFarlane with Doreen Manuel

BROTHERHOOD TO NATIONHOOD

GEORGE MANUEL and the Making of the Modern Indian Movement

Praise

Brotherhood to Nationhood is more than just a biography of the life of George Manuel; it demonstrates the roots of an Indigenous internationalism and political theory that is grounded in the ethics, knowledge, and practices of the Secwepemc people.

LEANNE BETASAMOSAKE SIMPSON, author of *As We Have Always Done*

Peter McFarlane's classic biography of George Manuel is an intimate and meticulously researched history of the leader and his life's work, discussing the critically important subject of Indigenous land and liberation. An absolute must-read.

GLEN COULTHARD, associate professor in First Nations and Indigenous Studies and Political Science at the University of British Columbia

Brotherhood to Nationhood is a necessary and critical book to read for anyone, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who is interested in the life of George Manuel, one of the greatest contemporary Indigenous leaders in Canada and internationally.

RUSSELL DIABO, member of the Mohawk Nation at Kahnawake and Indigenous policy analyst and activist

An essential companion book to *Unsettling Canada*, *Brotherhood to Nationhood* arrives at a critical moment in the fight for Indigenous sovereignty. As co-author of this updated edition, Doreen Manuel brings warmth, honesty, and insight to Peter McFarlane's incisive text. Here we see the unvarnished risks and great rewards of a lifetime of dedicated activism—as well as the lessons that front-line Indigenous communities today can carry forward.

NAOMI KLEIN, author of *On Fire: The (Burning) Case for a Green New Deal*

This second edition, with updated text co-written by Doreen Manuel, includes brand new insights, including the key role Indigenous women played in George Manuel's story. Uplifting and inspirational, this book

honours the legacy of a visionary political strategist, refreshing our collective memory on how to combine tact with toughness, organize effectively, build respectful relationships, live humbly, and to treat every step—either forward or backward—as a new learning experience in the larger struggle for Indigenous rights.

SHERYL LIGHTFOOT, Canada Research Chair of Global Indigenous Rights and Politics

As a chronicle of postwar Indigenous resistance—from the back-breaking work of organizing communities to the building of the Assembly of First Nations and the fight for Aboriginal rights—this book is unmatched in its detail. As a testament to the many Indigenous women, without whom none of this could have happened, whose hard labour in struggling to keep families alive empowered that generation of Indigenous men, this book is even more important. Finally, as an exploration of the vision and strategic brilliance of George Manuel, and the power of his leadership, *Brotherhood to Nationhood* is without parallel.

BONITA LAWRENCE, chair of the Department of Equity Studies at York University

A gripping account of the life of a brilliant Indigenous leader whose vision remains a powerful blueprint for Canada's unfinished business of decolonization. Like few books I know, it vividly conveys the sacrifices, rewards, and hard strategic choices involved in organizing for political change. The next generation of activists should read it to learn just how much we are indebted to the Manuel family's legacy.

MARTIN LUKACS, journalist and author of *The Trudeau Formula*

We live in a time of colonial reconciliation amputated from truth, of extractive predation by the state and its citizenry, of denial and willful amnesia about Canada's violent past and present. George Manuel's decolonial vision speaks just as strongly today as during his lifetime, and it continues in the commitments of his family and his people. This new and expanded edition of *Brotherhood to Nationhood* reminds us of the transformative possibilities of a life's work grounded in truth and a relentless commitment to decolonial justice. We need this book, more now than ever.

DANIEL JUSTICE, professor of First Nations and Indigenous Studies
and English at the University of British Columbia

Brotherhood to Nationhood

Peter MacFarlane with Doreen Manuel

BROTHERHOOD TO NATIONHOOD

George Manuel and the Making of the Modern Indian Movement

Foreword by Dr. Pamela Palmater

Afterword by Kanahus Manuel

Between the Lines
Toronto

Epigraph

George Manuel may be Canada's greatest prophet, and to refuse to consider his words of advice may be the ultimate folly of our times.

Vine Deloria Jr., American Indian activist

Contents

Praise

Epigraph

Foreword: Dr. Pamela Palmater

Preface: Peter McFarlane

Preface: Doreen Manuel

Note on the 2020 Edition

Part I: The Neck of the Chicken

- Chapter 1: Paradise, Paradise Lost, 1960
- Chapter 2: The Hard-Luck Shuswap Kid, 1920–1932
- Chapter 3: White Plague, Red Victims, 1932–1954
- Chapter 4: Local Agitator to Provincial Leader, 1955–1960
- Chapter 5: A Future for Your Children, 1960–1963

Part II: Building the National Movement

- Chapter 6: Community Development and the Arthur Laing Gang, 1965–1967
- Chapter 7: Down the Garden Path: Chrétien/Andras Consultations, 1968–1969
- Chapter 8: From White Paper to Red Paper, 1969–1970
- Chapter 9: The National Chief
- Chapter 10: The National Indian Philosophy, 1971–1972

Part III: Indian Shogun

- Chapter 11: International Travels
- Chapter 12: Land Title and the James Bay Battle, 1972–1973

Chapter 13: Red Power
Chapter 14: Political Eruptions in British Columbia, 1975
Chapter 15: A Voice for the Fourth World, 1975–1976
Chapter 16: Back to British Columbia, 1976–1977
Chapter 17: The Peoples' Movement, 1977–1979
Chapter 18: Constitution Express, 1980
Part IV: Final Days
Chapter 19: European Express, 1981–1982
Chapter 20: Passing the Torch, 1982–1989
Epilogue
Afterword: Kanahus Manuel
Notes
Index
Copyright

Foreword: Dr. Pamela Palmater

In today's digital age, Indigenous peoples all over Turtle Island have unprecedented access to information in real time. Social media has not only facilitated greater communication between our sovereign Native Nations but has empowered Indigenous resistance and organization in ways settler governments could never have imagined. We have access to critical information in real time that helps bolster our advocacy in both domestic and international fora. At the same time, social media has opened the virtual door to increased government surveillance and infiltration of our resistance movements. This requires us to strategically adapt to these changing conditions and think about our resistance in different ways. Our Elders remind us that sometimes to move forward, we need only look back. Within the life story of the late George Manuel, we find a call to look back—look back at who we truly are as sovereign Native Nations—so that we can find a way forward to resist assimilation, reclaim our lands and rebuild our Nations.

Peter McFarlane's book, *Brotherhood to Nationhood: George Manuel and the Making of the Modern Indian Movement,* is the incredible life story of George Manuel—one of the greatest Native leaders of our time. Manuel rose to power at a time when we most needed him, while at the same time mentoring other leaders to join the cause. What sets this book apart from other biographies, autobiographies and historical writings about Native leaders, is that this one shares not only Manuel's greatest joys, celebrations and political successes but also his regrets, his challenges and his mistakes. This book presents us with an imperfect man—one who had to navigate his own trauma—while trying to inspire our people to join the cause. The Manuel family's decision to allow McFarlane to tell George Manuel's unfiltered story may be one of the greatest contributions to Native history and politics. We can come from places of trauma, we can struggle to find our path and we can make bad decisions yet still be heroes for our Nations.

This new edition of the book tries to address one of the most important elements missing from the first edition—the voices of the Native warrior

women in Manuel's life who were an integral part of his success. Manuel's first wife, Marceline, played a key role in supporting his work and the cause while also raising their children. We also learn that Manuel's high-powered political teams were made up of mostly strong Native women. By sharing the important roles that Native women played in the cause, this book helps dispel the myth that the Indian movement was led only by men. Our Elders tell us that leaders occupy many roles in our Nations—some less visible than others. This new edition of the book helps bring these other leaders to light and is strengthened by the voices of Doreen Manuel, one of George's daughters who is a success in her own right, and an afterword by his granddaughter Kanahus Manuel—one of the leading native activists today.

Manuel's story is one of frustration and hope, anger and passion and weariness and strength for a cause that has been passed down to his children and now his grandchildren. Although this book was originally published two decades ago, new readers will be struck by the similarities between the issues that faced us then and those that face us now. Some may even feel disappointment at the exclusion of non-Status Indians from the movement or the failure to support Native women in their quest to regain their lost Indian Status. However, in being honest about the decisions he made at the time and why, Manuel holds himself to account. He holds out his decisions —that will ultimately be judged as having helped or hurt the cause—as invaluable insight for the future. Manuel's transparency is a rare trait in politics and one we don't see very often anymore.

While prime ministers and political parties may change, Canada's genocidal policies against Native peoples continue under different names. We have endured a long winter of violent colonization of our lands and peoples. We have always looked to our leaders for direction in our resistance and resurgence, knowing that our greatest strength as sovereign nations has always been in our collectives. Together, we have defended our lands, our peoples and our sovereignty. We are still here. We are still strong. We will never give up. Our collective resistance to state oppression, dispossession, racism and violence is how we, as collectives, have survived ongoing genocidal laws and policies that target our peoples for removal from our lands.

This book unravels the tale of an undying commitment to the Indian movement, despite the personal cost to the late George Manuel and the many leaders with whom he surrounded himself. It is the story of our

collective struggle and one that we will ultimately win, in part, because of the commitment to the cause shown by leaders like the late George Manuel. By passing on these important values to his children and grandchildren, he has ensured that there are new generations of warriors to take up the cause. I am honoured to have worked with his son Arthur and his granddaughter Kanahus as they continue George Manuel's legacy. Reading this book again has re-inspired me to put even more effort into our cause. I believe that this next generation of Native warriors will be equally empowered by the lessons learned in George's life.

March 30, 2020

Preface: Peter McFarlane

When Between the Lines publisher Amanda Crocker suggested it might be a good time to release a new edition of *Brotherhood to Nationhood*, I admit I felt some ambivalence. The book told the story of one of the most remarkable Indigenous leaders of the 20th century, but it was more than twenty-five years old; I hadn't looked at it in decades and I feared it might be irredeemably outdated. I told Amanda I would reread it and contact the Manuels and see what they thought before making a commitment. I then sent a note to Doreen Manuel, George's daughter, and told her about the publisher's reprint suggestion. I said I would go ahead only with the family's approval.

Their approval was essential because, from the beginning, the book had been rooted in my friendship with the Manuel family. I worked on it directly with George's son Bobby, then the head of the family, and indirectly with Bobby's brother Arthur, who was already a friend and at whose urging I took on the project.

I had met Arthur in Montreal in the early 1980s through a group of Indigenous activists I came to know while freelancing for CBC Radio. He showed up at my small apartment on Chambord Street with mutual friends, Pottawatami painter Dana Williams and his brother Kenny. Arthur was working on a contract for an Indigenous organization in Ottawa at the time, and he often visited Montreal on weekends. I had just published my book on Canada and Central America, and we had a lively discussion about Indigenous peoples in Central America, who he was extremely knowledgeable of. It didn't take me long to discover that Arthur was, politically speaking, the smartest guy I'd ever met. We kept in touch after that meeting, and eventually I met his wife Beverly and his wonderful children, who I am still happy to be friends with today.

Arthur's father, George Manuel, was still alive when we met, but he was already quite ill. It was after George's death in 1989 that Arthur suggested I write his biography, and the following year I travelled out to Neskonlith to meet with Bobby, George's oldest son, to talk about the

project. Bobby had come within two votes of being elected national Chief in 1980 and he was also a power in the Indigenous movement. He sat with me for hours, describing what he saw as the lay of the land and gave me a detailed list of people I should interview for any book on his father. His list, combined with many months of research at the National Library in Ottawa, provided the content for this book. But at the heart of it are the voices of the many remarkable people who Bobby and Arthur had introduced me to. Among the most important were Phillip Paul (Sencot'en), Harold Cardinal (Cree) and Marie Smallface Marule (Kainai). Each was a towering figure in their own right, and all of them spoke patiently to me for hours about how the movement developed and George's unique role in it. All three of them deserve a much higher profile than they have been accorded, especially Marie Marule. Her connections to the African National Congress, the African socialist movement and to labour leaders in Canada shaped much of the strategic terrain of the Indian movement at the time. She was not only the ranking member of George's team but a valued friend and confident. I was pleased that the reprint of *Brotherhood to Nationhood* would bring these voices back to life and, in a sense, give them a chance to participate in today's political discussions.

In researching the original book, I had also been guided by many voices who were sometimes described at the time as Manuelistas for their devotion to George and his ideas. Among these were Dave Monture, Bill Badcock, Rosalee Tiyza, Millie Poplar, Wayne Christian, Roberta Jamieson and my friend Wayne Haimila who I would later co-author a book with. I also spoke to many of George Manuel's key non-Indigenous advisors like Walter Rudnicki, Doug Sanders and Louise Mandell and some of his political opponents at the time like Bill Wilson. A new edition of *Brotherhood to Nationhood* would bring all of these voices back to speak to another generation. It also would bring back the voices of two important Neskonlith Elders, Amy August and Mary Thomas, who spent many hours talking to me about the young George and life in the community in the first half of the last century.

A new edition would also bring George Manuel and his fighting tradition into the present. After all, the growth of the Indigenous movement has been one of Canada's most important political developments in the last half century. Since 1951, when an Indian Act revision lifted the restrictions on Indigenous organizing, the movement has emerged from the political

wilderness where Indigenous concerns were addressed by the handful of retired military men who ran the Indian Affairs department. It has become a central issue of the country's political and constitutional life.

These gains did not come easily. It took the efforts of innumerable activists in every region of the country fighting for their rights against all levels of government. And it took leaders who were, in fact, more skilled at political manoeuvrings than their opponents in government.

In his day, George Manuel was the greatest of these leaders. In his three decades of active political life, he served not only as the head of the national Indian organization, but also as the main strategist and visionary of the movement.

As a builder of organizations, his contribution is unequalled. When he took command of the newly formed National Indian Brotherhood in 1970, it was a paper organization without a funding source or a clear political direction. Manuel gave the twelve provincial and territorial Native organizations that made up the NIB a common "national Indian philosophy" aimed at winning sovereignty for the First Nations and built the organization into the largest lobbying force in Ottawa.

Manuel's vision took him further—he sought the unity of Indigenous peoples of North, Central and South America and Eurasia. He called this collection of Indigenous societies, which had been swamped under successive waves of European expansion, the Fourth World and wrote a powerful book with that title. To give that world a voice, he launched the United Nations-affiliated World Council of Indigenous Peoples in 1975.

Through these two organizations and his writings and speeches, George Manuel gave shape to today's Indigenous movement. Yet, despite these accomplishments, which earned him three Nobel Peace Prize nominations, he never stopped seeking new ways to push the struggle forward. When he became convinced that he had reached the end of his effectiveness as what he described as an "establishment Indian," he returned to British Columbia to build and lead a "peoples movement" that was designed much more like today's Idle No More than the current Assembly of First Nations that replaced the National Indian Brotherhood.

It was while he was leading his peoples movement from his British Columbia base that George Manuel had his greatest single impact on the national scene. During the constitutional debate of 1980, he led a thousand of his supporters to Ottawa and forced the government to include

Aboriginal rights provisions in the Constitution, thus opening the door for future breakthroughs.

* * *

While Bobby Manuel and other family members were essential in laying out the road map for me to follow in my research, I should also point out that they were far from backseat drivers. On some of the thorny issues about his father's life, I would ask Bobby if I should put them in or leave them out. His answer was always the same: if it was true, leave it in. This, I would discover, was how the Manuels operated. Decades later a mutual friend who read this book and was very generous in their praise of it, said the only thing they did not agree with were the sections where George might be seen in a less than flattering light. Arthur seemed surprised by the objection. "But it was true," he said. "Why not say it if it is true?"

So in the end, the book contains the unvarnished truth of a man who struggled against the genocidal oppression of Canada in his youth and then went on to become a champion of the oppressed in the entire Fourth World of Indigenous Nations around the world.

By the time Doreen got back to me and said, "Let's do it," I was glad that the book, despite its flaws that were based on my own limitations, would re-emerge into the light.

I was even more certain of the value of a new edition when Doreen agreed to write a new preface and to work with me as co-author to update it. Among other things, Doreen has added a family perspective and important background information that I did not have at the time.

Doreen also gently, and quite rightly, takes me to task for not spending enough time with the women of the family in researching the book—and she helps correct that omission by providing information on her mother's key role in her father's political life. In discussing the reprint with her, I also learned that she was the source of one of my own favourite personal parts of the original book—the story of her mother and father's courtship and of her mother's own leadership-by-example role in the struggle. Although we didn't meet at the time, Doreen's original notes had been passed along to me during a short meeting I had with her sister, Vera Manuel, and they made their way directly into the story. I thank her for her important contribution to the original manuscript; for her valuable, and very much appreciated, addition to this one; and for her friendship all along the

way.

In fact, for me personally, one of the most important outcomes of the original book was that it began a friendship with the entire Manuel family that has endured to this day. After the book was published, I continued as an occasional volunteer communication guy for Arthur in his brilliant career as an Indigenous leader and thinker. In the final four years of his life, I was honoured to be asked to work as an editor on *Unsettling Canada* and *Reconciliation Manifesto,* the books he co-authored with his friend and political confidant Grand Chief Ronald Derrickson.

The legacy of George Manuel continued in a very real way in Arthur's leadership of the anti-colonial struggle in Canada and internationally. After Arthur's tragic passing in January 2017, that legacy has continued in the work of his children, George Manuel's grandchildren. At the moment of this writing, George's grandson Ska7cis and his granddaughters Kanahus, Mayuk and Snutetkwe, have worked with their mother Beverly to build a community of tiny houses that stand in the way of the Transmountain pipeline and a thousand-man "man camp" that is set to invade Secwepemc territory. They are known as the Tiny House Warriors, and there is no doubt George Manuel would be fiercely proud of them. They are inheritors of their grandfather's assertion that he would rather die without an agreement with the government and pass on to his children and grandchildren "the legitimacy of the struggle than a deal that they could not live with."

It is more than fitting, then, that this edition of the book ends with an afterword from Kanahus Manuel who, along with her sisters and brothers, looks ahead in the struggle they inherited from the man who did so much to define and advance the movement for Indigenous sovereignty in Canada and internationally.

Preface: Doreen Manuel

I believe that even in a book that is primarily about politics and the activism of our peoples, family details are important in understanding the incredible pressures involved in mounting a modern-day movement while struggling with the effects of colonization, childhood trauma and intergenerational grief.

At the end of his life my dad, George Manuel, said to me, “don’t let the people forget about me.” He was not vain about his contribution, although it would span his lifetime and be one of the most significant works accomplished by any Fourth World Indigenous leader in the world. Rather, he wanted the people to understand the magnitude of the battle that he foresaw in our future and to be inspired by the visionary work that could still be accomplished.

Peter McFarlane’s book is part of that legacy work that helps my dad’s spirit to rest well. Thank you to Peter for all of the research, time spent living among my family and for your incredible writing that pays tribute to George Manuel, a great leader.

Throughout his career, my dad’s teams were primarily made up of strong women. I honour those women who worked tirelessly with him to protect our Aboriginal title and rights.

My traditional names is Running Wolf. I was born in the late night hours of February 13, 1960. My dad was partying with Chief Harvey Jules in the living room of our family home. My mom Marceline, and Harvey’s wife, Mary, were visiting in the kitchen when mom went into labor. Between them, the only vehicle they had that would fit all of them was a pick-up truck. In labor with her youngest of six children and during the coldest month of the year, my mom climbed into the back of an open box pickup to take the long thirty-mile ride to Kamloops hospital. She no sooner arrived when I popped out. I tell this story as a way of letting you know that my mom was as tough as nails and, above all, fearless.

George and Marceline were born in the early 1920’s. They were both survivors of the Indian residential school. You read about George’s

childhood in this book, but Marceline is barely mentioned. Growing up in a family affected by colonialism, women's contributions were barely celebrated and rarely recognized. I recalled that when Peter was doing his research, he first met with all of the men in the family in Chase. By the time he made his way to Vancouver, he had only arranged to meet with our eldest sister, Vera. I gave my stories to Vera, and the story about how mom and dad first met, the opening of their love story, made its way into the book.

I always knew that mom was an enormous part of dad's work in the early days, especially her fundraising skills. She was the one who brought back the craft and traditions of tanning hides, buckskin work, feather work and beadwork to the Secwepemc. None of that existed after the harsh effects of colonization from the nearby Kamloops residential school. Mom was a residential school survivor herself, but when she was released, her grandparents took her home and made her stay there until she learned the skills of a traditional woman. After her traditional womanhood training, she went to work at Coqualeetza Indian TB clinic in Chilliwack, BC where she met Dad and they fell in love.

When they married and started a family, she steadfastly supported his values and beliefs. She wanted and was prepared to fight alongside him for the human rights our peoples so desperately needed at that time. She made gloves, moccasins and all sorts of artwork and sold it so he had travel money for his political work. She held the family together and fed us the best she could with what was left after he took the bulk of the money to organize the movement. Many times we had nothing but chicken feed to eat for dinner because there was no other food. To help out the family, all of us kids picked bottles off the side of the road, and picked through the garbage dump looking for anything useful. My brothers Bob and Art learned from a young age how to strip cars to make money. Our mom remained a tough activist throughout her life. I remember her and I tanning ten hides all at once, three of her fingernails fell off during that tanning session, and she kept on working without a complaint. She was part of the Leonard Peltier defense efforts that fought his extradition from Canada; the Indian Child Caravan in the 1970s that fought to stop the rampant apprehension of First Nations children; the Concerned Aboriginal Women's Movement (late 1970s) that overtook the Vancouver Indian Affairs office as a stand to demand better living conditions for our peoples; and she supported the Constitution Express.

I think it's important to honour the sacrifices that our mom and my brothers and sisters made to aide in our dad's work; they contributed to his success in the work he did for all Indigenous peoples.

There are a few details in this book that require clarification.

Starting with chapter six, there are a few family details that are omitted. Dad recounts them in his daily journal that he started in 1966 and wrote in for most of his life. On January 1, 1966, after they had been separated for two years, he visited mom in the hospital. This separation was the permanent one. He wanted to take an educational program and leave the children. She supported him completely, and he was grateful for her support. By April 1966 he was back in British Columbia.

> **Friday April 8, 1966**
>
> Took Marceline to the Kamloops Indian Residential School to take out Arthur, Arlene, and Richard. I was very happy to see them for the first time since January. Marceline went to Salmon Arm with Arlene to visit Bobby by bus. Phoned Marion to tell her to tell Alma to have Doreen by the highway in Chase for Marceline to pick her up.
>
> **Saturday April 9, 1966**
>
> Had a slight misunderstanding with Marceline over Doreen staying with Alma, said Doreen was starving. I then took Gloria to Vernon for a treat supper, then went back to Chase with Arlene, Richard, and Doreen and camped at the old house again.
>
> **Monday June 25, 1966**
>
> My little sweet girl Doreen and I camped last night at Tessie's, we slept in this morning. Arthur got back from Vernon at 4 pm today and we then went to Chilliwack arrived at 10:30 PM camped at Mrs. Williams. We had a very happy get together with Vera, Arthur, Arlene, Richard and Doreen.
>
> **Wednesday April 14, 1968**
>
> Annual Holidays. Departed from Canal Flats at 8 am proceeded through Windermere, Radium, Golden, Rogers Pass, Revelstoke and arrived at Salmon Arm BC Gordon Lake, Twin Island Lodge where my children are at 2 PM to find that Bobby got left by Gloria and Arlene went with Gloria, leaving Doreen to look after Bobby and Gloria's baby of 6 weeks old, quite a responsibility for my 8 year old Doreen, but then Doreen has grown and matured beyond her years.

Mom was hospitalized for an extended stay, and dad moved Arlene, Richard and I to Cowichan while he worked as a Community Development Officer. He had left Arthur in Mission Indian Residential School. During the summers Arthur would get out come to visit us then hit the road looking for work, which is how he was arrested and sent to the prison in Calgary.

From an interview I conducted on camera with Arthur a few years before his passing, he stated that dad didn't send money until he was almost ready to be released and that it wasn't even enough for a bus ticket back to residential school. It was the prison warden who gave him the balance of the bus ticket to get back to Mission.

We lived with dad for most of the time he spent in Cowichan. When he planned to move to Alberta is when he put Arlene and I in the Port Alberni Indian Residential School and Richard in the Mormon Indian Placement program.

> **Sunday October 1968**
>
> I brought the girls to the residential school . . . last time I took them out Doreen was very depressed and it made me feel bad.
>
> **Friday April 4, 1969**
>
> Arthur and Doreen are with me and I am really happy that they chose to come and stay with me, for a few days during the Easter holidays. I love them so very much and I miss them so very much, but circumstances, which is very difficult to go into makes it impossible to stay with me. I hope a day will come within the near future, when circumstances will make it possible to keep them with me, finances etc, stable enough to give us all a sense of real security.
>
> **Monday November 24, 1969**
>
> I bought my son Arthur an office desk from where he can do his homework. I love this boy something terrible and I am very impressed with his efforts toward his homework and his efforts to attain a half decent education. He is one of my boys that appears to have the desire to go on to higher education. A life he will no doubt appreciate.
>
> **Saturday December 20, 1969**
>
> My two boys are going to fly by Air Canada to Victoria BC. This will be both Arthur and Richard's first trips on an airplane. My son Richard has been on the LDS Indian placement program for the past one year and a half. I requested that I take him out for Xmas and the President Harry Smith, Calgary refused me, so I am taking him out anyway. It is my responsibility and I feel I want him to grow up with me. I love him very much and I want him to know that. I want him to experience the experience of being with his father to grow up with.

Only a couple short months after our dad was born, his father Rainbow collapsed while working in the field. In an interview I conducted with my dad's younger sister, Tessie, we talked about their mom, Maria's, marriage to Rainbow. Tessie said that Rainbow was considerably older than Maria and was childless. He wanted to leave his land to someone and so he approached Maria's parents to ask their permission to marry her. He

explained to them that he didn't expect her to be a wife in a romantic way; rather, he needed a young woman to help him with the farm and, in turn, she would inherit the land after he was gone. However, Maria soon fell in love with Rainbow and their marriage and resulting son, George, was born out of love. When Rainbow passed away so suddenly, Maria was heartbroken and suffered the loss of the man she had grown to love.

After much painstaking deliberation, our mom left our dad because he was, like many Indian residential school survivors, struggling with severe childhood trauma, which caused him to behave violently towards her. He would not allow her to take the children, Bob, Vera and Arthur. Back in those days women had little power in the family. She met a man in Calgary and they lived together. Eventually Dad found her; he phoned her and asked her to come home. He put Vera on the phone to plead with her to come home. She told him she was pregnant and he told her that he would adopt the child and treat the child as his own. True to dad's word he always treated Richard as if he were his own child. As adults I asked Richard if he ever wanted to meet his biological father. Mom had told me his name and I offered to help Richard find him. Richard declined, stating that he had a father and loved him very much.

* * *

Peter says, "The rejection of funding had been a serious tactical error because it was premature." I remember being by my brother Chief Bob Manuel's side as we lived through the rejection of funds on the Neskonlith reserve. It was a turning point for Neskonlith. I know that singular experience changed us forever. It was like our spiritual fast to come back into our power as a warrior people. As a young teen I remember dad taking me home to Neskonlith to visit. On one particular visit we drove through the village. That image is burned into my memory. Men and women stood out on the road swaying with drunkenness, a baby sat in a mud puddle in a soaking wet diaper crying. When we rejected funding, we had a band meeting and everyone agreed to participate. The ones who could not do without their alcohol moved to town to collect social services, and our community dried up overnight. Sarah Deneault's family planted potatoes in their large field, enough for the entire community, and we planted squash. Susan August, Nora Narcisse—every garden contributed different selections. Those of us with hay fields all agreed to pool the earnings to pay

hydro bills and pay for essentials that we couldn't gather ourselves. Hunting and butchering parties were planned. As if overnight, we shed our colonial blankets and stood up into independence. I was never more proud of my people and of my brother Bob as I was during that time. He led them through a life-changing era that would make each person whole again. I became a warrior woman and shed all fear and doubt. As a result of our resurgence as warriors, it was many of us who became the backbone of the Indian Child Caravan and Concerned Aboriginal Women's Movement. It was many of the members of those two groups who eventually joined the Constitution Express. Therefore, while a differently timed rejection of funds may have yielded a different history, the way it played out made a huge impact on our survival as a people.

Peter and I have continued to work together all these years later. Bob, Vera, Arthur and Richard have all passed on to the spirit world. Some of Bob's greatest achievements are documented in this book. Arthur went on to become a great leader in his own right. He published two books—*Unsettling Canada* and *Reconciliation Manifesto.* Vera became an internationally renowned facilitator and trainer of intergenerational childhood trauma recovery, as well as a celebrated writer, poet and playwright; her works dissect the effects of colonialism. Emalene (Arlene) explores models of colonization through story and theatre as a way to work toward Indigenous community resurgence. Richard was a highly successful community and economic developer for our people of the Neskonlith First Nation. I am the first First Nations woman in Canada to hold a seat on the board of directors of Knowledge Network and to hold the position of director of a major film center. I represent our people on several film and television industry groups and am highly instrumental in raising funds and developing services and representation for First Nations in the industry. I am still a political and environmental activist. Of my father's younger children, whom he had with Marlene August, Martha works for a mining company, George Jr. is a grassroots activist fighting industries that endanger our environment and Ida is a grassroots activists fighting to protect the land and water and bring recognition to the plight of our murdered and missing women. Ara Aikio, my Dad's Sámi child, who he had with Maria Sofe, is also a land and water protector in his territory.

Dad's living situation became unstable in 1986; that's when he moved in with me. Although they separated when I was a young child, our mom

remained true to the visionary work they had started together, and she respected him as leader, offering to help me with his care. The old people say that when people are soul mates they usually pass into the spirit world within a year of each other. Dad passed away 360 days after mom.

Our family is made up of dysfunctional survivors of Indian residential school colonialism. Both mom and dad were survivors, and four of us younger of the six children attended Indian residential school—Arthur, Arlene, Richard and I. Dad taught those of us who cared to learn about protecting our Aboriginal title and rights, the land and water, and the rights of future generations. His legacy continued and still continues through his children and followers, the Manualistas, who adopted his values to protect the rights of the children yet unborn.

Note on the 2020 Edition

You will notice that we left the use of the term “Indian” in this edition because it was the most widely used term at the time by Indigenous people. It does seem dated now, but it is also perhaps useful that the reader is reminded that this book was written almost three decades ago. It also avoids, in some instances, the problem of using “First Nation” to describe what is a community or an individual. This is something the People of Neskonlith continue to be sensitive to. They object to referring to Indigenous bands as “nations” as in First Nation. The Nation is the Secwepemc Nation and not the band, which even today they still continue to refer to as the Neskonlith Indian Band. For the same reason, I have also kept the earlier spelling of “Shuswap” instead of Secwepemc. In fact, Shuswap also continues to be used as the official name of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, although Secwepemc is by far the most commonly used spelling today.

Part I: The Neck of the Chicken

I get the neck of the chicken
I get the rumble seat ride
I get the leaky umbrella
Everyone casts me aside

Cab Calloway song and George Manuel party piece

Chapter 1: Paradise, Paradise Lost, 1960

> Is that what you people are afraid of—that the Indians will be a self-supporting nation?
>
> George Manuel to the Joint Committee on Indian Affairs, May 26, 1960

George Manuel limped into the oak-panelled hearing room on May 26, 1960 and set his battered briefcase down on the table.

At his side was Genevieve Mussell, a non-Native woman who had gained Status through marriage and who served as his vice president on the Native Rights Committee of the Interior Tribes of British Columbia.

In front of him, framed by the Red Ensign on one side of the room and a portrait of the young Queen Elizabeth II on the other, were a dozen MPs and senators who had been given the task of reforming Canada's Indian policy.

Manuel had been preparing for this meeting for the past two years. He and a group of activists had travelled the British Columbia interior, spreading the gospel of resistance and recording their peoples' grievances. The result was a one-hundred-page brief detailing the desperate straits of British Columbia Indians and criticizing the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) for a century of crimes and misdemeanours.

The parliamentary committee had allotted Manuel only two hours to express a hundred years of frustration. Even in that limited time, the MPs and senators would not be an easy audience. The Joint Committee had been sitting for a year and the members were clearly bored by the endless parade of witnesses. Noel Dorion, the MP who was chairing the hearings, had begun to focus his energies on merely keeping the process moving—in, out, next—with a minimum of discussion.

When Manuel took his seat in the witness chair that morning, Dorion didn't think he would pose much of a problem. George was wearing a new blue suit that the people of his community had bought for him, but the fabric was stretched uncomfortably across his boom man's shoulders. Dorion had also noted that the Shuswap Indian had entered the room with a pronounced limp, and Dorion was obviously unimpressed by the figure he

cut; he assumed that the white woman had been brought in to speak for him and offered her the floor.

Mussell, a strong backer of Manuel, reacted with surprise to Dorion's invitation. Mr. Manuel, she told the committee, would be speaking for himself. And speak he did. The smile left his face and Manuel began in a slow and deliberate voice coloured by a strong Shuswap accent. By the time he finished, he had stretched his allotted two hours into two full days of testimony, and he had delivered the most sweeping indictment of the government's Indian policy the committee had heard.

Manuel described how the lack of an adequate economic and land base on the reserves was driving young people into the slums of the city.

He told them how inadequate social services left old people living in dirt-floor huts with only $22 a month in support payments. He told them that police harassment was so serious that in some communities the Chiefs intentionally let the roads deteriorate so they would no longer be passable for RCMP patrol cars. He berated Colonel H.M. Jones, the director of the DIA, for hiring as Indian agents retired military men who had no knowledge of or sensitivity to Indian peoples. Finally he called on the John Diefenbaker government to repair the damage by funding Indian organizations so they could help Indian peoples rebuild their shattered lives and re-emerge as "self-supporting nations."[1] In the colonial complacency of the 1950s, the suggestion that the goal of Canada's Indian policy should be to help the First Nations win back their economic and political independence sounded heretical. The buzzwords at the time were "assimilation" and "integration," which meant moving people from the reserves into towns and cities where they would eventually disappear as distinct peoples. Dorion quickly chastised Manuel, warning him that he was "wandering all over the map" with his self-supporting Nations comment, and reminding him that the topic at hand was Indian reserves, not Nations.[2] But Manuel refused to back down. He continued to make his case, shifting his tone with his arguments—moving from thoughtful discourse to humour to the occasional flash of anger to the simple plea that the government of Canada look at the disaster it was wreaking on the lives of his peoples.

That first day he spoke for almost six hours, and while he did the mood in the room gradually changed. The objections from the MPs and senators became fewer and fewer, and even Dorion began to lean forward in his

chair. By the time the marathon session ended on the second day, the parliamentarians were listening to the Shuswap leader with genuine respect. Whatever they thought of his ideas, they recognized that they had met a man of vision and deep conviction and few believed they had seen the last of George Manuel.

The source of the vision that took Manuel to Ottawa that spring, and that would take him to the four corners of the world during the next two decades, was not derived from political theory. It was rooted in his own knowledge of who he was and where his Shuswap people had come from.

Yet in many ways the story of the Shuswap Nation could have been told by a Carib Indian in the sixteenth century, a Maliseet in the seventeenth, a Huron in the eighteenth or a Plains Cree in the nineteenth. But for the Shuswap people, the full weight of the European occupation didn't come until the 1860s when Manuel's own grandfather was in his twenties.

Manuel brought with him to Ottawa, and to all political struggles, the memories of the old man who had grown up in a world where the Shuswap were a free people living on the lands the Old One had given to them when the Earth was still young.

* * *

During the hearings, one of the MPs referred to reserves as "glorified concentration camps." Manuel bristled at the statement.[3] He reminded the politicians that most reserves were the remnants of vast national territories, and he told them that the lands were "rich in memories and traditions."[4] In his case, those memories were reinforced every time he fetched a pail of water from the river in front of his house and passed the deep circular excavation where his grandfather Dick Andrew had lived in a *kekuli,* the traditional Shuswap pit-house.

The *kekuli* reminded him of just how recently the Europeans had usurped the land. When Andrew was growing up during the 1840s and 1850s, all the lakes and streams and all the mountains and valleys still had Indian names. The Shuswap lived off the natural abundance of the land and still followed their ancient rhythm of life with the thirty-seven Shuswap bands travelling between summer and winter hunting and fishing grounds. In between, they came together in the spring and fall for informal national assemblies to arrange marriages with members of other bands, allocate

hunting and fishing areas and discuss relations with the neighbouring tribes and with the newly arrived fur traders.

The closest trading post to Andrew's Neskonlith band was Fort Kamloops, seventy kilometres west at the meeting of the South and North Thompson rivers. Twice a year the people of Neskonlith paddled south to trade their stockpile of furs, dried salmon and dried meat for European goods like firearms, knives and axes.

If the Chief found that the prices at Kamloops were not attractive enough, he would lead his people to other posts in Gale or Hope where they could strike a better deal. Overall, the trade was profitable for the Shuswap, and they treated the whites as shopkeepers who were free to carry on their business on Shuswap territory as long as they stayed within carefully proscribed limits.

The calamities of contact for the Shuswap people began in 1861 when smallpox, the scourge that had wiped out millions of North, Central and South American Indians in the previous three centuries, arrived in British Columbia.

After taking a terrible toll on the coast, the epidemic spread into the interior. Estimates of the death rate among the Shuswap run as high as three-quarters of the population; in some cases, whole villages were wiped out.

The Chief of Andrew's Neskonlith band led his people into the hills to avoid contact with the most badly infected areas. Still, the losses were devastating, with almost half the band succumbing to the disease.

After the epidemic ran its course, the survivors were left with a terrible psychic scar. The traditional medicines and practices the people had acquired from their ancestors had proved useless in battling the disease; some historians believe it was the resulting loss of faith in traditional medicine that paved the way to the Indians' conversion to Christianity.

As elsewhere in the Americas, the French Oblate missionaries staged baptisms of entire villages and gave Indian People Christian names.

Along with preaching the Christian gospel, the Oblates worked diligently to undermine the traditional Shuswap religion and customs and encouraged the people to settle down and take up agriculture. By the turn of the century, most of the Shuswap were at least nominally Catholic and only a few, like Manuel's grandfather, continued to resist Christian teachings.

But even those who held on to the old faith could not resist the next

wave of the white invasion. In the late 1860s, settlers began to move into the area to take advantage of a government decree allowing each white man to pre-empt 320 acres of Indian land and to purchase a further 320 acres from the colonial land office at a cut-rate price.

As settlement increased, traditional Shuswap hunting areas were cleared and fenced. Game animals receded further into the forest and the Shuswap were themselves forced to turn to small-scale farming, particularly raising livestock, to supplement the loss of game.

The small scale of the farms was not necessarily a matter of choice. The colonial authorities had awarded only about twenty acres of land to Indian families, compared to the 640 acres set aside for the settlers.

When the Shuswap were forced to depend more and more on agriculture for their foodstuffs, each family had access to less than four per cent of the land of their white counterparts. The Shuswap people found themselves paupers on their own land, and by the time Manuel was born in 1921, all but a fraction of the band's hundreds of square kilometres of land had been annexed. His people were corralled on a small strip of land between the South Thompson River and a steep mountain ridge across from the town of Chase.

All this—the smallpox epidemic, the mass conversions to Christianity and the hordes of settlers who had invaded the Shuswap territory—had taken place in the lifetime of Manuel's own grandfather, and Andrew passed on to George the story of his people.

For Manuel, his grandfather's stories of the past formed a kind of two-part national epic—paradise and paradise lost. Manuel, as the parliamentarians discovered in 1960, was determined to write the third book of the epic—paradise regained—with his deeds. The 1960 hearings were his opening shot. Within a decade, Manuel would be back in Ottawa leading a national Indian organization dedicated to regaining the lost land and liberty of the sixty or so First Nations that had been trapped within Canadian borders.

Chapter 2: The Hard-Luck Shuswap Kid, 1920–1932

> A hard-luck Shuswap kid from the British Columbia interior, George Manuel had a bagful of excuses to sit out his life in self-pity and let the state support him.
>
> CP wire service report, October 3, 1977

On the long winter nights when the winds whipped the snows against the walls of the log cabin, Dick Andrew told his grandson not only about their peoples' past, but also recounted the rich storehouse of Shuswap legends.

As a child, George Manuel's favourite was about the Shuswap boy who was orphaned at an early age and spent his days wandering the village.

At night he would sit close to the tents where the Elders were telling their children and grandchildren stories from the past, and in this way the orphan quietly absorbed all the wisdom of his people. When he grew to manhood, he emerged as the wisest person in the village and became one of the greatest Shuswap leaders of his day.[1] In later life, Manuel used a version of the listening-at-the-tents approach in his life-long commitment to self-education. But as a child, the story also spoke to his position in the world. He never knew his father. In fact, little is known about Pierre Rainbow Manuel, except that he was the son of Quimopohian (Rainbow), the band Chief of the Shuswap village of Skeechestn, and that he arrived in Neskonlith at the end of the first world war in search of a wife.

In the Shuswap tradition, Rainbow consulted the local Elders about the women of marriageable age, and the one he finally approached was Maria, the daughter of Andrew and his wife Macreet.

The young couple wed in early 1920 and settled in Neskonlith on the slopes above the South Thompson River near the bowl-shaped valley called Skunk Hollow. They built a one-room house, and Rainbow Manuel began to farm the adjacent hillside.

Their only child, George, was born on February 17, 1921. Just two months later, Rainbow Manuel collapsed in his field and died of what appears to have been a heart attack.[*]

Dick Andrew and Macreet immediately came to the aid of their widowed daughter. They brought her salmon to eat and coal oil for her

lamps. As soon as the child was weaned, they began to give the young mother a break by taking him to stay with them for a few days at their log house by the river.[2] A year or so later, when Maria began to see another man, Louis Manuel (no relation to Pierre)†, George's stays with his grandparents became longer. When Maria and Louis married and started a family of their own, George found himself living more or less permanently with his grandparents.

In later life, George would have some difficulty sorting out his relationship with his mother. He saw her often when he was growing up—her house was only a few kilometres away from his grandparents—but they were never close emotionally and George felt like a forgotten son in his mother's eyes.[3] The fact that he was raised by his grandparents, however, would have a defining impact on his life. Andrew was a practitioner of Indian medicine, and the world Manuel grew up in was guided by his grandparents' traditional values and by the basic tenets of the ancient Shuswap culture.

Dick Andrew (second from right) and Macreet (on the right), with three other family members, 1920s.

In the interior of British Columbia in the 1920s, the core of that culture

was still intact. The town of Chase had been built across the river a few years before Manuel was born, but the peoples' defence was to draw into themselves. Adults went into town only every month or two to sell or trade cordwood or small quantities of farm produce in exchange for a few basic provisions like coal oil, sugar, a pouch of tobacco, a sack of flour and ammunition for hunting. Children were generally kept away from the town.[4] The isolation was helped by the fact that few of the people spoke English. Most, like Manuel's grandparents, spoke the Shuswap language at home, and with their Indigenous neighbours they spoke Chinook, a lingua franca made up of a mixture of British Columbia Indian dialects and a smattering of French picked up from the fur traders. George Manuel did not hear a word of English until he was eight years old.

By the 1920s most of the people in the village were at least nominally Catholic, but the absence of a resident priest prevented the Church from dominating the community's political and spiritual life. When an itinerant priest came to the village, the people attended mass at the church by the river, but after he left, they conducted village councils in the traditional manner.

Manuel's own memories of growing up in the 1920s were of a simple life where the community still lived and worked closely together.

He recalled the "traditional chiefs leading the people into the fields to tend the crops. The men would work at harvesting or planting . . . according to the season. The women cooked for them on open fires. . . . No one was idle."[5] The children also pitched in to help. At home and during the community gatherings, they carried water and chopped wood, not because they were told to, but because, as one of today's Elders recalls, they simply felt there was an unspoken expectation that they do their share.[6] As a child, Manuel learned that when you went to visit friends or relatives, you didn't sit down if you noticed the water pail or wood box was empty. You went out and filled them. It was a tradition Manuel later attributed to giving societies, where you returned the gift of hospitality with the gift of your labour.[7] Boys of eight or nine were also expected to fish and hunt. Manuel's cousin, Mary Pierrish (later Thomas by marriage), who also spent a great deal of time living at Andrew's house, remembers that the young Manuel often headed off with his grandfather's rifle early in the morning and hunted all day on the forested slopes on the west side of the mountain ridge.

Even at that age, it was a source of embarrassment to come home empty-handed. As Manuel later told Mary Thomas, he would sometimes get so desperate when he saw the sun beginning to set that he would shoot a rabbit because "at least you can make a pot of rabbit stew. At least it's something you can put on the table."[8]

While Manuel was living with his grandparents, he was also expected to help his mother and stepfather up at the farm. Louis Manuel drove him hard in field work. One of Thomas's most enduring memories of Manuel as a small boy is the sight of him behind a hand plough and team of horses with his face so encrusted with sweat and dust that all you could see were his eyes.

Along with learning the tough physical skills they would later need to earn their livelihood, the Shuswap children were given moral training through instructional stories that were repeated over and over again.

These stories were not, in themselves, didactic; instead, at the end the storyteller would say, "*Tat a mas*," which means literally "See that man" to show the child that by following the good or bad actions of the people in the story, they would reap the same good or bad consequences.

The young Manuel also learned about the world from the trips he took with his grandfather to surrounding Shuswap villages to attend councils of Elders or to make medicine for those who were still suspicious of white doctors.

Manuel always spoke with great respect about Dick Andrew's traditional healing. He rejected the term medicine man or shaman, describing his grandfather instead as an Indian doctor or psychologist. "He talked to his patients and he listened to them. . . . The songs and rituals were one way of drawing out the anxiety and pains."[9]

The Shuswap children of Manuel's generation were also exposed to the political discourse of their people in the large community gatherings.

One of the provincial leaders who visited Neskonlith was Andy Paull, who later became George Manuel's first political model and mentor. But during the 1920s, the most influential leader on the local scene was Manuel's great-uncle, William Pierrish, a veteran of World War 1, who had lost an arm in the service of the King and decided that it was time that the King and the Dominion government paid some of their outstanding debts to the First Nations.

Manuel and his generation learned about the political struggle in the

same way they learned about other aspects of life: by watching and listening.

* * *

At the turn of the century, it had been widely assumed by the Dominion government that the “Indian problem” would soon solve itself as Native peoples, who were considered an “inferior race,” gradually died off from white man’s diseases. The few survivors would then be absorbed into the larger society and the Indian nations would disappear into the mists of time.

These expectations were stated most clearly by the DIA deputy superintendent, Duncan Campbell Scott, who wrote that his goal was “to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department.”[10] The government was confident that the Department would succeed in these goals. In the House of Commons during this period, the Indian question had less to do with the fate of the First Nations than with the division of their lands once they finally disappeared as distinct peoples.

After the First World War, it gradually became clear that neither the Indian peoples nor the Indian land question were about to go away.

Indian populations and Indian militancy were growing across the country, and the returning Indian veterans like Pierrish were spearheading the movement.

The Pierrishes were one of the most important families in the community. The younger generation of Pierrishes had been deeply influenced by the traditional views of Dick Andrew. William, his brother François and their sister Christine had spent several years at Andrew’s house in the 1890s after their mother, Macreet’s sister, died in a canoeing accident.

François Pierrish was the first to rise to a position of leadership; he was elected as Neskonlith band Chief in 1914. But when the First World War broke out, he and his brother William and Dick Andrew and Macreet’s three sons, Joe, Harry and Aleck all enlisted in the 42nd Forestry Brigade and were sent overseas to the battlefields in France.

François returned without physical scars, but he had been deeply affected by the horrors of three years in the trenches. He resumed his job as the Neskonlith band Chief, but he couldn’t put the war behind him. In 1921, the sight of a seaplane flying over his field caused him to have a flashback that was followed by a complete mental and physical breakdown that ended with his death a few weeks later.[11]

William Pierrish's brutal experiences in the war had cost him an arm and turned him into a political activist. He took over as band Chief after François's death and turned Neskonlith into a political outpost for the recently formed Allied Tribes of British Columbia.

The Allied Tribes was made up of sixteen tribal groups that were preoccupied by the so-called "BC land question." Unlike Ontario, the Maritimes and the Prairie Provinces, where colonial authorities signed treaties with the First Nations, British Columbia authorities had not made formal arrangements for extinguishing Aboriginal title.

The Allied Tribes enjoyed widespread support from grassroots Indian communities. In Neskonlith, Chief William Pierrish arranged to have a horn sounded to call the people from the hills when one of the organizers visited the community. Today's Elders remember that when the call came, everyone, young and old, streamed down the hillside to the community hall near the river to attend the meeting.[12] By all accounts they were lively affairs, especially when the Squamish leader, Andy Paull, was present. Along with being a key organizer for the Allied Tribes, Paull was a sports reporter for *The Vancouver Sun* and a boxing and lacrosse coach. In Vancouver, he had a reputation as a flamboyant dresser, which complemented his flamboyant personality. But when he was on the stump for the Allied Tribes, he dressed in country clothes and relied on his considerable skill as an orator, in both Chinook and English, to entertain the people by verbally shadow-boxing with the white authorities, poking fun at their pretensions and jabbing at their stubborn refusal to obey their own laws of land ownership when it came to the First Nations' lands.

The Allied Tribes' main strategy at the time was to put the British Columbia Indians' case for Aboriginal title before the Privy Council in London.

The organization appeared to be on the right track in 1921 when the Privy Council ruled that a Nigerian tribal group did, indeed, retain Aboriginal title to their land because the colonial authorities had never signed a treaty with them.

In 1926, when George Manuel was five years old, Chief William Pierrish travelled to London with two other British Columbia Chiefs to deliver a petition to the King demanding the restoration of their land and sovereignty under the same conditions that the Nigerians had won. The petition stated that "We Indians want our native titles to our native lands, and

all our land contains as we are the original people of Canada. We Indians want our consent before laws are made upon our possessions."

As a war veteran, Chief Pierrish was also concerned about a government plan to automatically enfranchise (remove the Indian Status from) all Indians who had served in the war. So the concluding paragraph of the petition stated: "We do not want enfranchisement, we want to be Indians to the end of the world."[13] The delegation was intercepted in London by the head of the Canadian High Commission who promised to deliver the documents to the King. He then persuaded Chief Pierrish and the others to return to Canada and take up the matter with the Dominion government.

There is no evidence that the High Commissioner delivered the petition to the Crown or the Foreign Office, but shortly after Chief Pierrish and the others returned to Canada, a meeting was arranged between the federal government and the leaders of the Allied Tribes.

By the time the Allied Tribes delegation reached Ottawa in the spring of 1927, however, the deck had already been stacked against it.

British Columbia had a large contingent of MPs ready to pounce on the Indian leaders at every turn, and when the meeting began, Duncan Campbell Scott stood up to dismiss the case of Indian land ownership out of hand, even before the Indians were allowed to speak.[14] Not surprisingly, the land claim was turned down by the committee because, as Scott later explained to Paull, "if Indians were to get the kind of decision to which you are entitled—you would smash Confederation."[15] Ottawa then moved quickly to ensure that the First Nations would never again be a threat to confederation by enacting a law that made it illegal for anyone, Indian or white, to solicit funds from Indians for the purpose of pursuing land claims. For the Allied Tribes and similar organizations that depended on grassroots funding, it was a death knell.

Indian resistance had been made all but illegal in Canada, and it would remain so for the next quarter century.

At the same time, the DIA was putting into place a systematic campaign to contain any expansion of First Nations' social and economic rights.

During the mid- and late-1920s, Parliament enacted a web of new restrictions on everything from the right of Indians to assemble and to sell their farm produce off the reserve to the right to spend more than two hours a day in a pool hall. One of the most harmful results of these measures was to transform the local Indian agent from an irritation to a kind of overlord

who controlled the minutiae of the peoples' daily lives.

By 1930, the post-first-world-war Indian movement was in tatters.

Until the early 1950s, when the proscription on Indian organizing was lifted, the movement would remain in a kind of legislated political dark age while successive federal governments continued to dismantle the Native land base and historic rights.

Manuel remembered feeling this sense of growing encirclement by outside forces while he was growing up. In 1930, when he was nine years old, he and his grandfather were travelling by wagon to visit a neighbouring Shuswap village when they were stopped by two uniformed men, either RCMP or local forestry officers, who were looking for fish or game taken illegally. The men rifled through their belongings and dumped some of the bundles on the wet ground, and then roughly ordered them to proceed.

After they had repacked the wagon, Dick Andrew was silent for a long time. Then he spoke:

> You can't hunt deer except when the townsfolk are in the bush, during what they decide is the right time to hunt.
>
> You can't bring down a bird to feed yourself when you're trapping. You can only fish four days a week, and they choose the days. Now they show us better ways to use nets and then say we can't use them. . . . Now they only want us to eat what we buy in their stores or grow with their tools.[16]

The words were spoken with weariness, but somehow Andrew held out a hope that the Shuswap people would one day win back their nationhood. He made this point to George and his cousin Mary Thomas one evening when he took them by their hands and, after singing them an ancient song, told them that one day they would have to fight for their people.[17] Years later, when Manuel was faced with a choice that amounted to his family or his political work, Thomas reminded him of his grandfather's words; she believes this helped him carry on with his political struggle.[18] For the nine-year-old Manuel, the personal struggle with the outside world began a few months later when a cattle truck pulled up to the reserve and the Indian Agent called out the list of names of the children who were to be shipped off to the Kamloops residential school.

George Manuel's name was on the list. He was about to be thrown into what he later called "the laboratory and the production line of the colonial system."[19]

The arrival of the truck was a traumatic moment for the whole community. A Shuswap woman who attended the school around the same time as Manuel recalled that many of the younger children viewed their forced departure as a punishment for something they had done wrong.

On her first day, "[the kids] they're all bawling . . . and Mums crying, and I can remember [saying], 'What'd I ever do to you? Why are you sending me away?' "[20] For some of the older children, the truck was greeted by a different set of emotions. After spending eleven months a year at the school for up to ten years, they had become more accustomed to residential school life than to life in their own community. For many, the English language was replacing Shuswap as the first language that came to their lips. As Manuel later observed, after "learning to see and hear only what the priests and brothers wanted you to see and hear, even the people we loved came to look ugly."[21] For the schools, the students who turned their backs on their parents and grandparents were the success stories. This showed that the policy of "aggressive civilization" was working, and once the children's pride in their Indianness was stamped out, it was an easy task to undermine their traditional culture and values.

The Kamloops school was run by the Catholic Oblate order who were assisted on the girls' side by the Sisters of Saint Anne. Their monopoly over the Shuswap young would last until the 1960s, and it was, as Manuel saw it, "the greatest gift the Dominion of Canada made to the Church." In later years, he would suggest that Native peoples should launch a class-action lawsuit against the Vatican for the abuse generations of Indian children suffered at the hands of the priests, Christian Brothers and nuns.[22] That abuse included a poor diet, a proscription on the Indian language, forced labour and a military-style discipline that was enforced by beatings.

One student of the Kamloops school recalls that the whole purpose of the institution seemed to be to crush their pride in themselves as Indians. During the daily religious services, the priests would "hammer it into our heads that we were not to think or act or speak like an Indian. And that we would go to hell and burn for eternity if we did not listen to their way of teaching."[23]

This assault on his people was particularly confusing for Manuel who was brought up in the strong moral atmosphere of his grandfather's teachings where "purity was a state of being within yourself."[24]

The teachers at the school portrayed men like Dick Andrew, who refused to embrace the Church, in demonic terms. Mary Thomas, who went to the school at the same time as Manuel but who lived on the segregated girls' side, remembers that after many years at the school, she began to see her grandfather through the eyes of her teachers. During her visits home, when she heard her grandfather chanting or singing the old Shuswap songs, she imagined that it was the devil himself who was speaking.

At the same time, the students were given very little in the way of useful academic instruction. After their morning allotment of fire and brimstone, most of the day on the boys' side was taken up in hard labour on the school farm while the girls were given cooking and sewing classes.

Manuel recalled that there was so little time spent in actual learning that after two years at the school he could barely write his own name.

What he and most other students remember most clearly and painfully about the school was not the hard work, which was at times spurred on by beatings, but the hunger. After eating only a ladle of porridge for breakfast and a ladle of watery stew and a piece of bread for lunch, supper was another ladle of stew and another piece of bread.

As Manuel put it, "hunger is both the first and last thing I can remember about that school. . . . Not just me. Every Indian student smelled of hunger."[25] As a result, the students were forced to steal food, pick berries and wild vegetables and, in some cases, even eat cattle feed to survive.

The hard work and poor food also contributed to the high incidence of illness, but medical care was almost non-existent. During his first year at the school, Manuel developed mastoiditis, a painful infection of the inner ear. The condition usually requires surgery, but for the young Shuswap boy the priests didn't even bother to call a doctor. Instead, he was laid out on a table while the priest operated on him with a kitchen knife and without anaesthetic.[26] It was a more serious illness, however, that allowed Manuel to escape the full brunt of the priests' and Christian Brothers' teachings and what he always described as the darkest years of life. It began during his second summer at home when a bad-tempered reserve dog bit a chunk out of his hip. When he climbed onto the cattle truck at the end of the vacation, the wound had swollen into a hard lump. Throughout that autumn, he felt a continuing soreness in his hip; then he developed a slight fever and began to lose weight.

Finally, one winter morning, he could not raise himself from his cot and

a doctor was called in to confirm what most of the Brothers suspected.

The Shuswap kid had contracted the white plague: tuberculosis. In his case, it was tuberculosis of the hip, or osteomyelitis. At the age of twelve, he began an almost decade-long battle for his life.

---

* Doreen Manuel: Only a couple of short months after our dad, George Manuel, was born, his father Rainbow collapsed while working in the field. In an interview I conducted with my dad's younger sister Tessie, we talked about their mom, Maria's, marriage to Rainbow. She said that Rainbow was considerably older than Maria and was childless. He wanted to leave his land to someone, and so he approached Maria's parents to ask their permission to marry her. He explained to them that he didn't expect her to be a wife in a romantic way; rather, he needed a young woman to help him with the farm. In turn, she would inherit the land after he was gone. However, Maria soon fell in love with Rainbow, and their marriage and son George were born out of love. When Rainbow passed away so suddenly, Maria was heartbroken and suffered the loss of the man she had grown to love.

† Louis Manuel came from the Kamloops band.

Chapter 3: White Plague, Red Victims, 1932–1954

> If the Indian race is a degenerated race, I am afraid that the whole effort is wasted. It may or may not be that a remnant of the race can be saved; I am not convinced one way or another.
>
> Agnes Macphail, House of Commons Debates, March 31, 1930

When George Manuel was officially diagnosed as having tuberculosis, he was shipped off to the Coqualeetza Preventoria in southern British Columbia. At the time, Coqualeetza, which means "meadowlark" in the local Stó:lō language, was staffed by Protestant missionaries and financed by an Indian Affairs grant of ten cents a day per patient.

Despite its poetic name, Coqualeetza had a ghoulish reputation among the interior Indians as a place from which few returned. Government statistics show that the Indian death rate was twenty times higher than that of whites. In sheer numbers, TB killed almost as many Indians in British Columbia in the twentieth century as smallpox had killed in the nineteenth. In extreme cases, whole families were dying from the disease; the worst hit community was the Kootenay Arrow Lake band, where only one band member survived into the 1940s.[1]

Each year, the mounting number of cases was discussed in the House of Commons as part of the debate over the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) budget. Yet despite the havoc TB was wreaking on Native peoples, virtually nothing was done to slow its progress. As in the case of the smallpox epidemic, Canadian authorities spoke in vague terms of Indians being "naturally subject to the disease"[2] and seemed prepared to let nature take its course.

The real reason for the severity of the epidemic among Indians as compared to whites was as simple as the difference in the living conditions and care given to the two groups. By the 1930s, most whites were inoculated against the disease, and in high-risk areas x-rays were taken annually. Those who did contract TB were sent to sanatoria where they received the best care available at the time.

Native peoples, on the other hand, were denied the vaccine and few

were x-rayed. When a full-blown case was detected, they were not sent to the modern sanatoria because the DIA refused to pay the price.

Instead, they were sent to church-run "preventoria," which were little more than isolation hostels where care consisted of Hail Marys and bed rest.

The causes of the steep Indian death rate were known as early as 1932, when the president of the Saskatchewan Anti-Tuberculosis League began an experimental program at the Fort Qu'Appelle Indian Hospital.

He gave regular x-rays to the local Indian children and administered the bacille Calmette-Guerin (BCG) tuberculosis vaccination that was available to whites. Not surprisingly, the infection and death rates dropped dramatically, but it was to be more than a decade before the government would spend the small amount of money to extend the program to Indians across the country. This negligence resulted in the death of thousands of people, with children accounting for two-thirds of the fatalities.

Yet despite the pain and the gravity of the disease, Manuel would come to look on it as his salvation because it allowed him to escape from the soul-destroying residential school. At Coqualeetza, he was spared the Christian Brothers' unrelenting attacks on his Indianness.

The food was more varied and plentiful, and he was able to meet Indian children his own age from all corners of the province, from Protestant as well as Catholic communities. He also met individual whites who, unlike the Christian Brothers, treated him and his people with respect.

He remembered with fondness the "hundreds of simple acts of kindness" of the nurses and the fact that they taught him how to read, brought him books and games and taught him to use his enforced quiet to his own advantage.[3] It was during these years that much of Manuel's future character was set. The pain of his illness, the inactivity and the long periods of reflection forced him to develop an inner life and a degree of self-knowledge that few people who have not survived a long illness ever achieve. These lessons came at a high physical price, however, as the bacteria's assault on his body left him with a twisted hip and a life-long limp.

Manuel had his first chance to test his hip when he was fifteen years old and was allowed to return to Neskonlith for a visit. It had been more than five years since the cattle truck had taken him away to the residential school, but the initial pleasure of his return was marred by the changes he saw in the community. The combination of hard economic times, increasing restrictions

on hunting and fishing, and a young generation that had been deculturalized by the years at the residential school had begun to break the circle that kept families and the community together.

He noticed that people were drinking on the reserve, something that had been rare only six years earlier. Since Indians were forbidden to drink legal alcohol, they drank over-proofed home brew, known locally as Chilcotin mickeys, that quickly led to stone-drunkenness and all too often to outbursts of violence.

During the 1930s, the young people who had passed through the residential school also began to spend more and more time in Chase, but they soon found that the town held little promise for them. The poor quality of their education and the racism in Canadian society made employment in the white world almost impossible, even for the school's graduates. They were, Manuel said, "equally unfit to live in an Indian world or a European world."[4] The young people had learned contempt for their own community and families, and yet when they went into Chase they were expected to sit in the back rows of the movie theatre. Afterwards, if they wanted to buy a soft drink before heading back to the reserve, there was only one restaurant, the most run-down greasy spoon in town, that would serve them. If Indians tried to go to one of the better restaurants, they were either asked to leave or were simply left unserved until they gave up and slipped away.

This unofficial Jim Crow treatment was not limited to Chase or to British Columbia. The same unwritten rules were in effect across Canada, with most restaurants, almost all hotels and, of course, all beer parlours strictly off limits to Native people.

Manuel noted, "You did not have to have an advanced political consciousness to realize how wretched and despised our people were in the eyes of the white men who held the power in the area. . . . For a long time this seemed to me just a part of the way things were, like the distance to town or the rain that soaked you on the way home."[5] Manuel spent the rest of the 1930s moving back and forth between Neskonlith and Coqualeetza. He was back in Neskonlith in 1939 when the Second World War broke out, and like most young Canadian men, he reported to the local recruitment office where he was quickly turned away because of his twisted hip.

The war did open up an opportunity for him to get his first job, however. With another generation of young men heading overseas, Manuel's doctor was able to arrange for him to be hired as a busboy at the white sanatorium

at Tranquille, across the river from Kamloops. His status was little different from the other ambulatory patients, except he paid for his care with a few hours of work each day in the cafeteria.

He was at the hospital in 1941 when Dick Andrew died at the age of 101. The old man had reportedly spent his last day walking several kilometres to visit his daughter, Maria, then coming back home where he had dinner and died that night in his sleep.

The death was a major loss to the whole community. He was, as Mary Thomas had said, “everybody’s grandfather.” Andrew provided the people with a living link to the time when the Shuswap were masters of their own lives and their own lands. For Manuel, the old man’s death was also the death of his father and teacher. For the rest of his life, he used the memory of his grandfather as a kind of beacon to guide him through the often rough personal and political waters he traversed.

* * *

Manuel did not have to face these personal challenges alone, however. At Coqualeetza he had developed a close friendship with Marceline Paul, a Kootenay from the Cranbrook area who worked in the hospital kitchen. Like him, she had a limp. In her case it was caused by a dislocated hip in infancy that was left untreated because medical care was not available to her people.

Manuel had first spotted her from his hospital window at Coqualeetza. When he found out her name, he began to shout “Marceline!” whenever he saw her. Initially, Marceline was too shy to respond, but Manuel persisted until she went to visit him in the ward.

Paul had also been raised by her grandparents and was strongly influenced by traditional values. She had suffered through the abuses of residential schools, including sexual abuse; despite the horrors of that experience she had retained a deep sense of compassion for others. She and Manuel immediately became soul mates in the dreary setting of Coqualeetza.

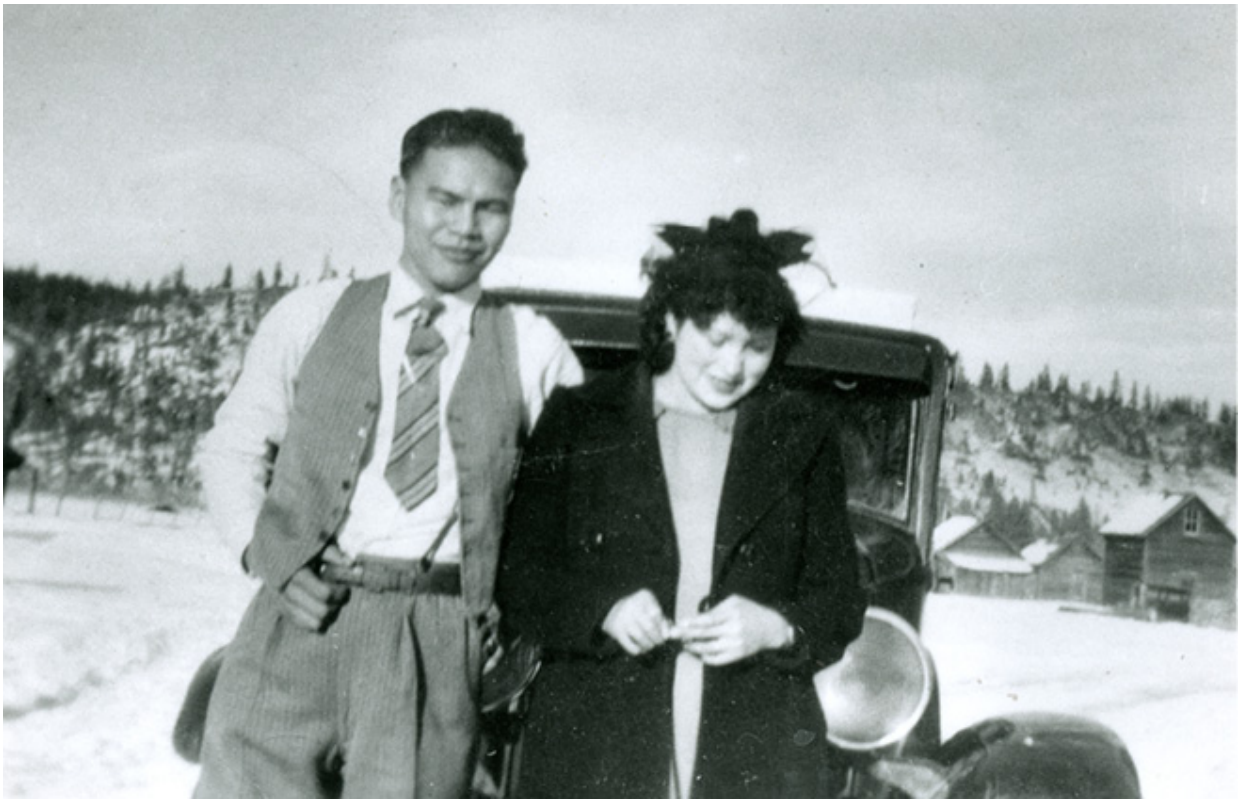
Even after Manuel went to Kamloops, they stayed in close contact and made plans to get married. That event was hastened when Marceline discovered her parents were arranging for her to marry a Kootenay man. Her response was to hop on a bus and go to live with Manuel in Kamloops. They were married soon after.

Their first child, Annie, was born in April 1945, but the happiness over the event was dampened a few weeks later when Manuel was laid off from his job at the sanatorium and he found himself out in the street with a bad

leg, a grade-two education and a young family to support.

At the time, fruit growers were one of the few large-scale employers of Indians in southern British Columbia and the northwestern United States. That spring, Manuel bought a battered old car and headed south with Marceline and Annie in search of work in the orchards of Washington State.

While he was busy working on that fall's harvest, tragedy struck the young family when Annie died suddenly of crib death. Manuel and Marceline wanted to bury her in Neskonlith rather than in a foreign land, so they brought her coffin home in the trunk of the car and laid her to rest on the hills above the community before making a sad return to the orchards in the south.



George and Marceline as newlyweds, mid 1940s.

A year later, when Marceline became pregnant a second time, they returned to Neskonlith. Louis Manuel and Maria had moved to Kamloops several years before, so George settled on the family land and built a makeshift one-room house which, like the one Rainbow Manuel had built thirty years earlier, lacked indoor plumbing, running water and electricity.

Once again, George Manuel was faced with the prospect of finding

work. But this time, he turned his attention across the river to the lumber mill that was running full tilt in the post-war boom.

Until then, few Indians had been hired to full-time positions at the mill, although a number were employed as seasonal workers hauling and rafting logs. But Manuel limped in and announced that he wanted a job as boom man, one of the best jobs on the river. And one of the toughest.

The boom man was responsible for keeping the logs moving into the mill pond and up the jack ladder, a sort of spiked conveyor belt that hoisted the logs into the mill. Boom men, it was said, had to learn to "walk on water" by leaping from slippery log to slippery log to reach the jams. Despite the fact that it required a great deal of agility and was generally reserved for whites, Manuel was determined to get the job.

He felt that he had proved himself as a worker in Washington where he had been promoted to crew foreman, and he thought he deserved a shot at a job on the river. It is a testament to the forcefulness of the young Shuswap man's personality that he convinced the mill foreman to give him a chance, despite his crippled leg and the company's racist policy of hiring only whites.

George Manuel (centre) working for the logging company, ca. 1960.

The foreman would not regret his decision. Men who worked with Manuel remember that he was a tireless worker who became a local expert at jam busting. If he wasn't around when the logs twisted into a Chinese puzzle at the river mouth, someone would be sent to get him because he was often the only one who could figure out how to untangle the jam. Manuel's work days were long and demanding, but after his shift he would head back across the river to work his father's land. It had not been tilled in years and he had to struggle to break the ground, seed the hay field and repair the damaged fences.

At the same time, he and Marceline were also busy raising their family. Their second child, Bob, was born in 1947, followed by Arnold a year later.

Arnold was never very healthy, however, and he died suddenly when he was two months old, thus compounding Manuel and Marceline's grief over Annie. It was a difficult time for both of them, and during this period the household was a sombre one. The sadness was gradually lifted in 1949 when their second daughter, Vera, was born; she was followed by Arthur in 1951 and Arlene in 1953. Doreen was born in 1960.

As his family grew, Manuel built a couple of additions to the back of his house and his friends began to joke that if he had any more children his house would reach all the way to Skunk Hollow. Eventually the couple bought a strip of reserve land on the town side of the river where he built a larger house. This one had electricity but lacked running water.

The Manuel children remember that life was tough in those early years and that their father was strict. George Manuel had worked hard during his own childhood and he expected the kids to pitch in and help around the house in the same way. Bob Manuel remembers that when he was still quite young he and Vera were given small buckets to fetch water; as they grew older, the buckets got bigger and they were expected to head down to the river, past the large round hole of Dick Andrew's *kekuli,* a couple of times a day to get water for the family.

They were all preoccupied with making ends meet. To earn extra money in the late fall, George, Marceline and the children went up into the bush behind the house and cut Christmas trees. During freeze-up, when things were slow at the mill, Manuel travelled 265 miles east to Athalmer where he cut Christmas trees for a contractor.

While he was gone, Marceline would bundle up the kids, grab the double-edged saw and cut the trees herself; the children helped to haul them

out of the bush.

In fact, life for the family was not much easier than it had been when George and Marceline Manuel were growing up in the 1920s. In many ways it had become worse. While the Canadian economy was going through a rapid post-war expansion, Indian peoples were still excluded from the political and economic mainstream, and their small reserves made it impossible for them to achieve a viable economic base for their communities.

George Manuel with his daughter Doreen, ca. 1963.

The economic crisis drove many more Indians into the slums of the city;

at the community level the cumulative effect was a permeating sense of defeatism and despair. It was a time when Colonel Jones's Indian agents ruled at the reserve level and the band councillors and even Chiefs were expected to stand hat in hand outside the agent's office waiting for an audience. When the people went to town, they walked with their eyes downcast to avoid making eye contact with whites, not so much because they feared an attack (although this certainly happened on occasion) but simply to avoid the insulting glance they would get in return.

Manuel experienced this political malaise in Neskonlith firsthand when he began to concern himself with the fifteen-kilometre irrigation system that the community had built with picks and shovels in the 1920s to link Neskonlith Lake and Adams Lake. The system required a great deal of upkeep, but as with many other community initiatives people no longer bothered to take care of it. When Manuel called a meeting on the subject, no one even showed up. It was, Manuel remembered, the worst of times, with his people reduced to "a condition of servitude and dependence."[6] But the growing despair he saw in his Shuswap Nation was also slowly drawing him toward his political vocation. In the meantime, the burden of leadership was being carried on the shoulders of Andy Paull.

* * *

A few years after the imposition of restrictions on Indian fund-raising and the collapse of the Allied Tribes, Paull was back in business with a new organization, the Progressive Native Tribes of British Columbia. He travelled regularly to Ottawa to speak on behalf of British Columbia Indians, addressing such issues as civil rights and the growing hunger in Indian communities caused by the Great Depression. But the land issue was strictly off limits when speaking in public or with the government. In the late 1930s, Paull forged a short-lived alliance with the more conservative Native Brotherhood in an attempt to bring together the interior and coastal peoples.

The Native Brotherhood had been founded in 1931 to represent the coastal Indians who, unlike the Catholic interior Indians, had been influenced by the Protestant missionaries. When Paull's association with the Native Brotherhood failed, he formed two new organizations, the Confederacy of the Interior Tribes of British Columbia and the North American Indian Brotherhood (NAIB), with representatives from Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

At the end of the Second World War, there was a growing spirit of reform in the country and both Paull's NAIB and the Native Brotherhood were trying to take advantage of it. This spirit could be seen in an article published in *The Canadian Forum* that cited parallels between Canada's Indian policy and the racial policy of the European fascists. Canada's attitude towards the Indian Nations, it was suggested, traditionally fell into two categories. The first and most blatantly racist went something like: "Treat your Indian like your dog, kindly but firmly. You must sometime give him the whip, but if you're kind, he'll be faithful." The second view was an equally paternalistic one that suggested that Indians be raised "into a civil and industrious people, by introducing the English language among them; and thereby instilling into their minds and hearts, with a more lasting impression, the principles of virtue and piety." Both versions, the article stated, bespoke the "complacent racial superiority which we dislike so much in other people that we're willing to fight a war with them about it."[7] Similar articles began to appear in *Saturday Night* magazine and the major dailies. In the late 1940s, the government responded by setting up a special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons to review the Indian Act. In a precedent-setting move, the Joint Committee invited Indian organizations from across the country to make submissions.

The federal government was also putting pressure on the British Columbia legislature to lift the prohibition on voting in provincial and municipal elections for Canadians of Chinese, Japanese and Indo-Pakistan descent. British Columbia responded by enfranchising not only the immigrant communities, but by giving the vote to Native peoples. The Native Brotherhood welcomed the move. In the 1949 provincial election, one of its leaders, Frank Calder, presented himself as the CCF candidate in a British Columbia riding with an Indian majority and won a seat in the legislature.

Andy Paull, on the other hand, vigorously opposed Indian participation in any Canadian elections. By doing so, he feared, they risked losing their special status within Confederation.

The division between Paull and the Native Brotherhood was one that went much further than the voting issue and reflected two very different positions on Native rights. Along with many other Indian leaders of the day, the Native Brotherhood's leadership saw the Indian struggle largely as a civil rights issue and focused on winning Native peoples equal rights with whites.

While Paull never missed a chance to fight for civil rights, he saw the issue as only a part of a larger Native struggle. It was not enough that Indians win equal individual rights as whites, they must also have their Aboriginal rights recognized. When Indians met whites on what would become known as a “Nation-to-Nation” basis, only then could they negotiate fair land settlements and ensure the survival of their people.

Understandably, the government was much more amenable to the civil rights arguments. The 1951 Amendments to the Indian Act contained measures like the lifting of restrictions on Indian organizing and on Potlatch ceremonies. It also gave Indians the right to consume alcohol in beer parlours but continued to forbid them the right to drink at home on the reserves or in private clubs like the Legion.

At the same time that it offered these minor reforms, the new act also contained limitations on band council powers and opened up, for the first time, the possibility of non-Indians purchasing Indian lands.

Paull was immediately on the attack. He dismissed the new act as a sham and charged that “White people have not yet paid for this country. They must treat us in a decent way, not wield dictatorial powers over us.”[8]

Paull still had the intellectual fire to lead the battle against the new Indian Act, but his health was beginning to fail. He continued to be a factor on the British Columbia Indian scene for the next several years, but his energies were ebbing, which created an opening for a new leader to emerge.

George Manuel, at home in Neskonlith and becoming increasingly frustrated by the condition of his people, was beginning to look around for a solution to their problems. Mary Thomas remembers that when their two families got together, the discussion around the kitchen table often turned to the plight of their people. She remembers the bitterness in Manuel’s voice when he observed that the only Shuswap accepted in the white man’s world were the Indian girls who were forced into prostitution on the streets of Vancouver. They wondered how they could fight the white man, who had all of the power, education and wealth. The only solution they found was to use their own kind of strength, the kind they had inherited from their grandfather, but neither of them knew quite how to begin.[9] For Manuel, however, the call was clearly there. His grandfather had told him he would be a leader some day; that prophesy was reinforced in the mid-1950s when Michel Anthony, a respected Shuswap Elder, summoned Manuel to his bedside where he was holding a “death court.” Manuel hurried over with his

son Bob who recalls feeling frightened at the sight of the dying man and by the sound of his raspy breathing. The eeriness of the moment only increased when he heard the old man tell the small group at the bedside that Manuel was going to be a great leader someday, so he should be treated with respect.[10]

Anthony's prophesy had come at an opportune time. In 1955, Manuel was thirty-four years old. He had built a life for himself and his family. He had proved himself in the often uncompromising world of working-class whites, and he felt he was ready to step forward and assume the mantle of leadership.

Manuel's entry into the political fray began a few months later when his son Arthur was sent to hospital for a tonsillectomy.

After Arthur returned home, Manuel was surprised to see the family doctor, James Treloar, drive up to the house.

Dr. Treloar showed him a letter from the DIA stating that it would no longer pay the medical costs of gainfully employed Indians. At first, Manuel thought the doctor was suggesting he was a dead-beat and insisted he would pay the bill. But that was not why Treloar had come. He knew Manuel, with his boom man job, could afford to pay. But Treloar was concerned that if he did the government would try to force the rest of the band to do the same, including those who were unemployed or only seasonally employed.

The doctor's warning drew Manuel up short. After Treloar left, he discussed the matter with Marceline. She took Treloar's warning seriously and was concerned about what the new policy would mean to her people. After all, she was going through life with a limp because medical care had been denied her, and she was determined that the same injustice would not be visited on another generation.

Manuel agreed and sat down to write a letter to the one man he knew could offer him guidance: Andy Paull.

Although Paull was in poor health, he responded quickly. "If you pay, you will be fighting me on this issue because I have already taken the government up on it."[11] Manuel would never have considered fighting Paull on any issue, so he decided he would refuse to pay the bill. When others in the community heard of Manuel's decision, they began to show up at his house with their own medical bills and Manuel realized that the doctor had been right. He found that "the poorest people, who had not had a cash-paying job in years, came around with bills in their hand and the most

worried looks on their faces."[12]

To each of them, Manuel relayed Paull's blunt message: "Don't pay." With those two words the South Thompson River boom man had taken his first political stand. He would never stand down.

Chapter 4: Local Agitator to Provincial Leader, 1955–1960

> British Columbia for British Columbians—White Man Go Home!
>
> Banner at 1959 NAIB Convention

Word of George Manuel's defiance quickly reached the office of Fred Clark, the Indian agent in Kamloops. Clark had already arranged with the local Chiefs to let the new regulations pass without public debate, and Manuel's refusal was a stick in his spokes. To prevent the issue from getting away from him, Clark called a snap meeting on the Adams Lake reserve, the Shuswap community adjacent to Neskonlith, to get quick public approval for the rule change.

Manuel heard about the meeting after he had arrived in Athelmere to cut Christmas trees, and he jumped back into his car and drove all night to attend. He was surprised to see that the hall was packed; for the first time he understood just how important the issue was for his people. He also learned a number of other valuable lessons that night. When he walked into the hall, Clark was sitting at a table at the front. He was about to bring the meeting to order when he spotted Manuel in the crowd. He paused, then announced that there was someone from another reserve who didn't belong there and asked the band council to order him out.

Everyone knew Clark was referring to Manuel, and there was a moment of silence. But for Manuel it was a moment of clarity. He remembered the village meetings of his youth when the people gathered together on their own to decide issues by consensus.

Now a white bureaucrat sat in front of them like a stern schoolmaster deciding who would speak and even who could stay in the room and listen.

Manuel was tired from the all-night drive, but when he stepped forward he let loose a lifetime of frustration.

"Mr. Clark," he began, "you're a gutless son of a bitch." Then he launched into a long rambling speech, the first he'd made in his life, in which he offered a litany of complaints, threatened to organize all the Indians in British Columbia and told Clark that he had been chosen to act as spokesman at the meeting.[1] Clark understood the importance of the last

statement. The spokesman was traditionally one of the most trusted and widely respected men in the community because it was to him that the people turned to negotiate with outsiders.

But Clark apparently suspected that Manuel was bluffing because he asked around the room if it was true. After a moment of hesitation, one of the Chiefs spoke up and said yes, Manuel was their spokesman.

Rather than standing up to Manuel and arguing the medical bill issue, Clark brought the meeting to a close. According to some observers, Manuel was the first modern Shuswap leader to challenge the Indian agent's authority directly, and around the DIA it sparked rumours that he was a "Marxist," a serious charge in the Cold War paranoia of the 1950s.[2] For Manuel, though, the confrontation with Clark was a step toward his political vocation. He discovered that if the people stood together, they could make the white man back down. He also discovered that he could be a spokesman, a leader in his peoples' struggles, and he decided to put his new-found talent to work.

His initial task, he decided, would be to overcome the decades of frustration that had led to a profound sense of apathy that weighed on his peoples' public and private lives. He would have to rekindle the sense of community he had known when he was growing up in the 1920s, so he set himself up as a one-man community organizer. Taking a leaf from Andy Paull's book, he began with sporting events. He started a fund-raising drive for the local baseball team, and then launched a local hockey team, the Shuswap Maple Leafs, where he served as manager, coach and even, on occasion, the back-up goalie.

One of the Indian players Manuel recruited was his half-brother Joe Manuel (son of Maria and Louis), who had worked as a rodeo rider on the northwestern United States professional circuit before returning to Neskonlith. Joe was a natural athlete and a welcome addition to the hockey team that became a fan favourite among the interior Indians.[3] Along with sporting events, George Manuel brought Indian musicians into the community. His favourite band was one that featured Chief Dan George playing bass fiddle with his two sons on guitar.

George Manuel and Chief George, who later went on to international acclaim as an actor, developed a close friendship, and during the late 1950s and early 1960s Manuel acted as his booking agent in the interior.[4] He also became a member and later the president of the local chapter of the Legion

of Mary, a Catholic lay society because, in his words, he "hoped that the outreach . . . would provide [entry] into every corner of the community,"[5] and that the respectability of the church-sponsored society would give him more credibility in his organizing work.

These outside activities still had to be fitted around his shift at the mill where he had also managed to get his half-brother Joe hired on. Joe remembers that booming was a tough job, even for a young man like him, and he was duly impressed by his older brother's stamina and by the respect shown to him by the white workers who his brother oversaw on the jam-busting jobs. One of his favourite memories of George was of the stocky brush-cutted boom man standing on the shore shouting to the white workers to "pull out that log . . . now the one in the middle . . . and the one to the left," and then, miraculously, the jammed logs would suddenly break free.[6] After their arduous shift on the river, most of the workers would head over to the hotel for a couple of beers, but George Manuel headed home, had a quick supper and then went to his room where he worked on his new-found political vocation, often until well after midnight.

Along with organizing community events, Manuel had begun writing letters to federal and provincial departments about the day-to-day concerns of his people—like the need for better irrigation equipment, repairs to the bridge between the reserve and Chase, and support for the local widows.

These exchanges turned out to be valuable in the long run as they gave him an idea of the various government departments and how they worked. But the experience also showed him that he lacked some of the basic tools for the leadership task he had set himself. Typically, he didn't try to hide his weaknesses; he confronted them and went to look for someone who could help him overcome them.

For help with his writing skills, Manuel went to the pool hall owner, Paul Paulsen, a Danish immigrant who had married a local girl and moved to Chase a few months earlier. Paulsen had an easy-going nature and none of the anti-Indian prejudice that infected the local population and agreed to lend a hand.

Paulsen showed Manuel the proper way to set up a letter and, after cleaning up the grammar, typed it out for him. Eventually, Manuel bought his own second-hand Underwood and became a proficient two-finger typist. His children remember that most nights they fell asleep to the persistent clackety-clack of the typewriter.

In later years, Manuel greatly improved his writing skills by going to night school; he also worked on his speaking ability by enrolling in the local Toastmasters Club. As the members of the Joint Parliamentary Committee were soon to find out, Manuel was a natural public speaker, and he later won a province-wide speaking competition.

In one of the stranger twists during this period, Manuel also found himself a member of the Chase Board of Trade and the local Elks Club. He was invited to join these organizations by Paulsen, and, in the end, was able to take something useful from both. His membership in the Board of Trade gave him his first real look at how a formal organization was set up, and through the Elks Club he made connections that he later used for renting the local Elks Hall for public meetings.

Perhaps even more important, the forays into the world of the local businessmen allowed Manuel to test himself. A few years earlier, he and Mary Thomas had looked at the white elite as a closed society armoured with money, influence and education. But he quickly discovered he and his people were giving them far too much credit. With his grade-two education he found he could more than hold his own with the local hotel owner, the realtor and the newspaper publisher. (In later years, he would make the same discovery about cabinet ministers and even world leaders whom he met in his travels.)

During 1956, Manuel also began to visit neighbouring reserves to consult with the local leadership or attend local North American Indian Brotherhood meetings. The brakes were gone in his car so he either hitchhiked, spending the night on the road or sleeping in haystacks or he had his friend Jacob Kruger drive him. Soon the local trips expanded to the point where he and Jacob were driving all over the province. At night they would sleep in churches or in Jacob's car.

While he was exploring the political terrain in British Columbia, Manuel was also learning about the national Indian struggle from Andy Paull. To help the Shuswap boom man in the medical bill issue, Paull contacted the deputy minister of Indian Affairs and told him that the issue was "a matter of grave concern to the Indians of this province as well as on a national scale"[7] and insisted that the care of Indian health remain the sole responsibility of the Canadian government.

When Paull was in the interior, he also began stopping by to visit Manuel in Neskonlith. Paull's main concern at the time was the new head of

the Indian Affairs Department, Jack Pickersgill. He had shocked the Indian world by announcing that he wanted to abolish the Indian Act and clear out all special legislation dealing with Aboriginal rights, including Indian land rights.

Pickersgill's aims were alarmingly similar to Duncan Campbell Scott's a generation earlier. As Pickersgill saw it, Canadians should "not be fully satisfied with our Indian policy until the day comes when all the Indians from coast to coast . . . have been integrated with the rest of the population and the Indian Affairs Branch and the office I now hold become merely a part of our history."[8] On the face of it, the program appealed to small "l" liberals because it spoke of individual equality and making Indians citizens "like everyone else," but at the same time the government would be removing the distinct status assigned to Indian lands. Reserves could then be divided up among their members and could be bought and sold on the real estate market where they could fall, piece by piece, to lumber companies, mining companies or neighbouring municipalities.

Some of the older Indian leaders, like the former president of the Native Brotherhood Alfred Scow, predicted that the First Nations would eventually disappear in Canada if the policy was implemented.

Scow only asked only that the government lift fishing and hunting restrictions to make life more bearable for the present generation. Andy Paull reacted with anger. As he told a *Vancouver Sun* reporter, Indians were not interested in following Pickersgill's assimilation program because whites were "the lowest form of animals."[9] In his discussions with Manuel, Paull brought him up to date on what was happening in Ottawa and stressed that, regardless of whether the government couched its assimilationist ideas in flowery post-war liberal rhetoric or in the domineering language of the past, it had to be resisted at all costs because assimilation meant the annihilation of Indian Nations.

Manuel's discussions with Paull were both invigorating and inspiring, and later he credited Paull as "the spark and the catalyst" who inspired his national vision for the First Nations movement.[10] For his part, Paull was also impressed with Manuel's leadership potential, and he soon began to invite him along on his tours of the interior. Paull introduced the South Thompson River boom man to his other NAIB contacts, Jimmy Scotchman and Victor Adolph in Lillooett, Bill and Forrest Walkem in Spence's Bridge, Gus Gottfriedson in Kamloops and Genevieve Mussell in Chilliwack. In the

future, they would form the core of Manuel's political support in the interior as they transferred their allegiance from Paull to him.

One of the more interesting introductions Paull made for Manuel was to arrange for him to meet Jay Silverheels, the Native actor who played Tonto on the Lone Ranger show, when he was visiting Vancouver on a publicity tour. It was the first time Manuel had ever been in the big city; at the time he didn't own a suit, so he showed up at the Vancouver airport with his friend Chief Dan George wearing his work clothes.

The two of them were so naive, Manuel recalled, that they expected to see not Silverheels, but Tonto himself, wearing moccasins and buckskins and with a feather in his hair. When the Indian actor passed by in a suit, Manuel and Chief George didn't recognize him. After the plane had emptied, they were told by a customs official that Tonto had already passed through. They caught up to him as he was climbing into a limousine and had to drag him back into the airport so they could properly welcome him with the drumming ceremony they had planned.[11]

Another of Paull's introductions brought Manuel together with the NAIB's young lawyer, Henry Castilliou Jr., who had been born into the struggle for Indian rights in British Columbia. His father, Judge Henry Castilliou, had been a Native Brotherhood lawyer who had worked with Paull before going on to the provincial bench. Henry Jr. followed in his father's footsteps by going to law school.

After a stint in the lumber business, Henry Jr. opened a law office in Vancouver and called on Paull to offer his legal services, which Paull accepted "as long as they were free."[12] The meeting between Manuel and Castilliou took place in Kamloops in 1957. Castilliou remembers that even at that early date, Manuel was already being tagged as "Andy's man" in the interior.

Castilliou's impression of Manuel was as someone who was very bright, a quick learner, but still rough around the edges.[13] Castilliou suggested that Paull served as Manuel's "guru," but it seems that the respect that developed between Paull and Manuel was mutual because in the fall of 1957, when the NAIB organized a separate Interior Branch, Manuel emerged as the first president of the region that had always been at the heart of Paull's political base.

Castilliou also began to find a place for Manuel in his legal work. In his years working with the NAIB, Castilliou never received a salary. Instead, his

reputation as a fighter for Indian rights allowed him to make his living defending Indians in criminal trials, which were paid for by the government, while he did his political work for free.

In researching his criminal cases, Castilliou often found it necessary to get a Native liaison from the area, but he soon found that he could contract Manuel to serve as an interpreter and researcher around the province. He recalls that "George could get along anywhere with anyone." Even on the coast, where the people were usually suspicious of the interior Indians, Manuel "could walk into a beer parlour, sit down and strike up a conversation, and before you knew it, he'd be collecting evidence" that Castilliou says he could not have gotten otherwise.[14]

More often than not, Castilliou said, they found that the culprit was a batch of overproof Chilcotin mickeys. Castilliou and others had long argued (as it turned out, correctly) that the murder rate in Indian communities would drop dramatically if the safer government liquor was made available.

The booze restrictions had a silly as well as tragic side. In his NAIB work Manuel often met with the Castillious at the Plaza Hotel where they stayed when they were in Kamloops. They would be having a few beers and when Manuel came in Henry Sr., then a British Columbia court judge, would have to go through the motion of saying, "The beer's in the bathtub, George. I can't offer you one, but we won't see anything, either."[15] Manuel had a great respect for the judge. He liked the older man's tough style and no-nonsense approach to politics. He also learned something about guff (don't take it from anyone) when, after a late-night session at the Plaza Hotel, Manuel decided to stay overnight but was refused a room. He was going to let it pass and rent a room at a local flophouse when Judge Castilliou intervened. He raised hell with the manager and got Manuel a room and a formal apology. After that incident, Manuel never again remained silent when he came across so much as a hint of racism in his daily life.

In his travels with Henry Jr., Manuel was also gaining insights into the inner workings of the legal system. When he started with Castilliou, he assumed, as most do, that if you were charged with an offence, you were guilty. From Castilliou, he learned the subtleties of the law and the ways it could be used to free as well as convict the accused.

These legal lessons with Castilliou would serve Manuel well in his later work when he was locked in a series of legal battles with the federal and British Columbia governments.

The travels with Castilliou were also used for a little NAIB politicking, and at times they ran into trouble from the rival Native Brotherhood.

Castilliou remembers that in Skeena, a rare Catholic community affiliated with the NB, their presence caused such concern that both the NB president, Robert Clifton, and one of its leading spokesmen, Guy Williams, were rushed into town to see what Manuel and Castilliou were up to on their turf.[16]

The NAIB-NB rivalry was not one that Manuel welcomed. From the moment he made his promise to the Indian agent to organize all of the Indians of British Columbia, he had been concerned by the split between the Protestant Native Brotherhood and the Catholic NAIB. To Manuel, that split seemed even more spurious in light of the new developments on the national scene.

Pickersgill and the federal Liberals were swept from power by the Diefenbaker Conservatives in 1957. The new regime promised to reinvigorate a country that had grown stale after a quarter century of one-party rule. On Native issues, the Conservatives promised to repeal restrictions on liquor and to give Native peoples the vote without taking away their Indian Status. Diefenbaker also kept a promise to put the first Indian into the Senate by appointing James Gladstone, a former president of the Indian Association of Alberta (IAA), to the Upper Chamber.

More important, the new government set up the Joint Parliamentary Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons with a mandate to refashion the Indian Act.

In British Columbia, the regional director of the DIA called a conference in Vancouver in April 1958 to discuss the new measures, and Manuel was sent as the NAIB delegate from the interior.

Paull's health was failing at the time, and the Vancouver conference marked Manuel's first move out of his mentor's shadow. Paull's organizations had generally served as vehicles for his own meteoric personality. But Manuel had come to see the need for a more broadly based organization to represent British Columbia Indians, and he quietly struck out on his own to try to promote province-wide unity.

In Vancouver he discussed the possibility of the British Columbia Indians getting together to file a common brief to the upcoming Parliamentary Committee hearings in Ottawa. Most of the Native Brotherhood delegates, however, were reluctant to cooperate with the NAIB.

The exception was Oscar Peters, an NB vice president and coastal Salish leader who shared Manuel's belief in Indian unity.

In the summer and fall of 1959, Manuel's interior NAIB branch and some of Peters's backers on the coast held a series of meetings to discuss the idea of a common brief to the Parliamentary Committee.

At a meeting in Hope, the NAIB branch and a handful of NB representatives agreed to set up the Aboriginal Native Rights Committee (ANRC) as an umbrella organization to draw up the brief. In the interest of attracting more NB support, Peters was elected to chair the committee with two Manuel colleagues, Bill Walkem and Genevieve Mussell, as vice chairs.

Although most of the committee members were affiliated with the NAIB, the new Committee was to take an approach to organizing that was radically different from Paull's. Instead of sending a single emissary to Ottawa "on behalf of the Indians of Canada," they decided to embark on an exhaustive consultation by visiting all the interior bands to find out the concerns of the people. Once that survey was complete, they would draw up a comprehensive brief and then return to the communities to have it ratified.

Considering that there were close to 117 bands in a territory that stretched from the Yukon border to the United States border and from the Fraser Valley to the Alberta border, it would be a formidable task. The ANRC had no paid staff, and the only funding was a $10,000 grant the government made available for the preparation of briefs. That amount would pay for only a fraction of their travel expenses, and the members of the committee would have to take the rest out of their own pockets.

To carry out the work, Manuel took a leave of absence from the mill and hit the road in the Indian organizing style of the 1950s and early 1960s. He travelled with Jimmy Scotchman, Gus Gottfriedson, Len Marchand and a couple of other members of the committee crammed into his Chevy. On most nights they were billeted in the communities they visited. On others they spent the entire night driving, usually with the young Marchand behind the wheel. Occasionally they took a cheap hotel room where they would crowd in for a quick supper of bologna and bread before flipping a coin to see who got the bed; The others camped out on the floor and tried to catch a few hours sleep before heading back onto the road. The local organizers in each community set up the public meetings where Manuel would outline the committee's goals and try to provoke a discussion with crowds that sometimes swelled to three or four hundred people. Invariably, the first issue

that arose was land, as the growing Indian population continued to put impossible strains on the land base of the reserves. More and more people were being forced to survive on outside jobs, but their residential school educations made employment difficult to secure.

As Marchand had discovered, even higher education wasn't enough to allow Indians to break into the mainstream. Marchand had recently graduated from the University of British Columbia with a B.Sc. degree at a time when a university degree was supposed to be a ticket to success, but he found it impossible to get a job and ended up on the road with the NAIB. In his stump speeches Manuel would often point to Marchand as an example of how the system was stacked against all Indians, rural or urban, man or woman, formally educated or not.[17]

In their travels, the committee members were again and again struck by the calamity that had befallen their people. They met with widows with TB living in shacks with only a few dollars a month in government assistance to keep them alive. They met with teenagers whose teeth were rotted from a poor diet and who had no access to dental care. They saw men who, in another time, would have been hunters and providers, lost in a perennial alcoholic fog. The majority of families were struggling year after year just to survive, and each year they were finding themselves slipping further and further behind. For Manuel, the plight of his people added to the pain he had felt when he returned to the reserve as a teenager, but it also gave him the impetus he needed to stay on the road and complete the exhausting travels through the province.

While the consultations were going on, Manuel was also following up on his other initiative: bringing British Columbia Indians together in a province-wide organization. He began by getting in touch with Frank Calder, the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation (the forerunner of the New Democratic Party) MLA and leader of the Nishga Tribal Council, to discuss a merger of their two organizations with the larger and more economically self-sufficient Native Brotherhood. Calder was interested in the idea and Manuel offered to arrange an NAIB convention in Kamloops to which the Nishgas and the Native Brotherhood would be invited.

The meeting was held in Kamloops in April 1959; 130 Chiefs from the three organizations took part. As Paul Tennant, who has written extensively on British Columbia Native politics, observed, "it was the most substantial and representative Indian gathering yet held in the province, having as its

only predecessors one or two assemblies of the Allied Tribes."[18] It was also one of the most colourful, mixing Indian tradition with a bit of 1950s small-town flash. On the day the delegates arrived, Manuel arranged for an outdoor parade with Indian Brownies and a local Indian school band led by an Indian war veteran, his chest covered with medals, who saluted the Chiefs during a march past. To house and feed the conference, Manuel used his Elks Club connections to secure the Elks Hall, and the Native Women's Homemakers' Club joined in to prepare a banquet. After the meal, the Chiefs were entertained by Indian singers and dancers.

George and Marceline (in middle of photo) in the parade before the Kamloops NAIB meeting of 1959.

The festive atmosphere seemed to be working on the NB leadership. Guy Williams proclaimed the Kamloops convention "one of the finest conventions ever attended by the Brotherhood," and Maisie Hurley, a white woman who was a strong backer of the NB and the editor of their newspaper, thanked George for his organizing work and echoed his call for province-wide unity.[19] The event even seemed to soften the Brotherhood's attitude toward Andy Paull. The NB president, Robert Clifton, expressed

regret that ill health had kept Paull away from the meeting and read a message from the NAIB leader that thanked Manuel for organizing the conference and urged all British Columbia Indians to work together as they had in the days of the Allied Tribes.

With the preliminaries out of the way, the delegates got down to business under a banner that read: *British Columbia for British Columbians: White Man Go Home!* As the banner suggested, the main issue would be the land issue, and Williams addressed the question with one of his toughest speeches ever, to the point where the local paper found the whole meeting "disturbing."[20] To Manuel and Calder's disappointment, however, the NB leadership was still reluctant to take the final step toward unity. Manuel and Calder had hoped that the NB would "revise its own goals and structure to transform itself into a truly province-wide organization."[21] But the Brotherhood's leaders refused.

Even worse, George Manuel and Frank Calder discovered that, despite the fine words from the podium, the Brotherhood leaders were not planning to lead a renewed fight on the British Columbia land question.

In the end, the conference failed to bring the rival British Columbia organizations together, but it did confirm that the organizer of the conference, Manuel, had emerged as one of the most influential Indian leaders in the province. This fact was underlined after Paull succumbed to his long illness in August 1959 and Manuel was elected to succeed him as the president of the NAIB.

At the time, the Aboriginal Native Rights Committee (ANRC) was still writing its brief to the Joint Committee for its May 1960 submission. With Paull's death and the failure to work a merger with the Native Brotherhood, there no longer seemed any reason to continue with what had become a largely artificial distinction between the NAIB and the ANRC. At a November NAIB convention in Kamloops, the committee dissolved into the new North American Indian Brotherhood (NAIB) under Manuel's leadership.

When Manuel appeared at the May 1960 hearings in Ottawa, he kept the ANRC name because that was the group that had been scheduled to testify. His performance in the two-day session reflected how far he had come as a leader and how his vision was expanding with his political experience. In many ways, it marked the end of the beginning of his political career. In five years, he had emerged from a local activist organizing sporting events on his

home reserve to an influential provincial and even national spokesman for Native rights.

In his organizing philosophy, Manuel combined the traditional vision of his grandfather with the leadership skills of Andy Paull. But he also had something to offer that Paull didn't. As Manuel later observed, the death of Paull had been "the end of an era of the one-man show."[22] What was needed was a leader who could bring people together into an organization that could take on the government with a united front of Indian nations. Paull had been unable to accomplish that, but within the next decade Manuel and his generation of leaders would.

By 1960 the movement had reached a cusp, with the scattered Indian organizations from across the country beginning to come together and meet each other for the first time. While the Quiet Revolution was taking place in Quebec, an even quieter revolution, the First Nations revolution, was moving through the country at large, and the consequences would reshape Canada's political landscape.

Manuel would be an integral part of that revolution, but on a personal level the struggle was coming at a high personal cost. His relentless travel and the loss of income from months off work were making life all but impossible for Marceline and his family at home in Neskonlith.

Marceline had been left to raise the children alone with almost no money to support them. To earn money for groceries, she would work far into the night making moccasins—tanning the hide and sewing and beading them herself—to sell to tourists passing through Chase.

While she struggled to feed her children, she also tried to help her husband by raising funds for the NAIB through the local chapter of the Homemakers' Club. For a number of years, she even served as the treasurer of the interior branch of the NAIB and, in her own way, she was as committed to the cause as he was.

But by 1960, she was near the end of her rope. Keeping hearth and home together while George was away was becoming too much, and the kids remember that things started to sour between their parents. When their father was home there were disputes over his frequent absences and the money he was spending on his political work that should have gone to the family.

According to some of Manuel's friends, Marceline also suspected that he was not totally faithful to her during his travels, and these suspicions

complicated the tensions over the time and money he spent on the road. The womanizing issue would arise again. Friends remember that Manuel's passion and wit, his crooked grin and rousing speeches made him an attractive figure for some of the women he met in his travels, and his friends were not sure that he always turned his admirers away.

Manuel's disputes with Marceline during this period did not always end with words. Vera Manuel remembers that both her parents began to drink too much, and their fights at times even becoming violent, with Marceline leaving him for short periods as they passed through this terrible period.

Looking back, Vera, now a Vancouver poet and playwright, sees in the deterioration of her parents' marriage the deep imprint of the residential school experience that scarred the souls of generations of Native peoples in Canada. It was there that her parents had been introduced into the culture of violence and abuse that would take them half of their lives to overcome. "Both of them worked hard to give us some kind of life," Vera recalls, "but neither of them had a lot to work with in terms of normal family experience. They were part of the general community breakdown."

Some have suggested that, as the atmosphere at home became increasingly bitter, her father simply found more reasons to stay away. But Mary Thomas believes that the deteriorating situation at home was something Manuel was trying to solve, not escape. She also worked at raising money for the NAIB and remembers that when George stopped by to chat and discuss new fund-raising schemes, he would often wrestle with the question of how to keep his family together while continuing with his political work. On a number of occasions, he even told her he was considering giving up politics altogether.

It was a dilemma that would stay with him for the next five years, but as Manuel once told Henry Castilliou, "politics is like buckin' horses. Once it gets into your blood, you're hooked for life."[23] And by 1960, Manuel had it in his blood.

Chapter 5: A Future for Your Children, 1960–1963

> You're not abandoning your children. You are building their future.
>
> Mary Thomas to George Manuel

For Indigenous Nations, the 1960s was a decade of consultations that began with the Joint Parliamentary Committee hearings and continued with an almost unbroken string of national and regional soundings on everything from renaming the Indian Act to abolishing it altogether.

During this period, the scattered Indian organizations were also struggling to build a national organization that would allow them to take their fight directly to Canada's political leadership in Ottawa. From the beginning, George Manuel was deeply involved in both the consultation and the organizing processes.

The first attempt at a national organization was the National Indian Council (NIC), which grew out of a series of government-sponsored annual meetings of Manitoba Indians in the late 1950s. The meetings offered Indians from across Manitoba an important forum to air their concerns and exchange information; they soon attracted Indians from other provinces.

By 1960, national participation had reached the point where Native leaders like British Columbia's Frank Calder were suggesting that they use the annual meetings as a base for launching a national Indian organization.

As the leader of the North American Indian Brotherhood, George Manuel was invited to the NIC's founding meeting in Regina in August 1961. At the time, the shape of the new organization was still uncertain. The delegates decided that "Indian" would mean anyone of Indian origin, including Métis and non-Status Indians; but there was no decision as to what relationship the NIC should have with existing Indian organizations or precisely what role it would play in the overall Indian movement. In fact, the only real decision taken was to adopt "red, buckskin and sky blue" as the official NIC colours because of their "relationship with the past and their deep significance for the people of Indian descent."[1] When it came time to elect a six-person executive that would draw up the NIC constitution, Manuel was among them. More typical than Manuel in the NIC leadership,

however, was the chair of the committee, William Wuttunee. Like most of the NIC members, Wuttunee was an urbanite, a Saskatchewan Cree lawyer who had worked for the Department of Indian Affairs in the past and who had appeared at the Joint Parliamentary Committee to advocate for the privatization of the reserves.

It was not a position that Manuel shared. In fact, at the 1960 hearings he had warned that Indian peoples "would not willingly surrender" their reserves and said that if they were privatized the only result would be to drive Indian peoples "to Vancouver's skid row."[2] But Manuel was in a minority on the NIC.

The agenda was controlled by urban professionals with little experience in the grassroots movement. This was confirmed at the second meeting in Toronto in August 1962 when Wuttunee was elected Chief of the council and the three councillors (or Sachem, as they were called) were an Ojibwa high school teacher living in Toronto, a Toronto real estate broker of Chippewa origin and Manuel, the only community-based activist on the executive.

Manuel had come to the meeting armed with five resolutions from the NAIB that he hoped would steer the NIC toward a more aggressive agenda. He wanted the NIC to endorse a call for a separate Indian Affairs department with its own staff and cabinet minister, a "dynamic" standing committee on Indian Affairs, a more equitable social welfare system and government grants to Native associations. [3]

The NIC was reluctant to take any firm positions, however, and instead settled for a hazy definition of its role. Its charter dedicated it to "serving all existing Indian organizations" and to "promoting the culture of the Indian peoples."[4] The lack of a clear-cut mandate led to the NIC spending its time on issues such as an emblem to go with the organization's colours, Indian dance recitals and an annual "Indian Princess pageant" instead of addressing the more difficult political and economic problems confronting the First Nations.

The only serious policy that had anything to do with fundamental Indian rights was a resolution adopted with Manuel's backing that urged the government to set up an Indian land claims commission to deal with unsettled claims. There was little follow-through on the issue, however, and the NIC would remain largely a social and cultural organization.

As a result, Manuel devoted most of his energy during this period to his political work in British Columbia. In January 1961 he was elected as the

Neskonlith band Chief. He had run for the position two years earlier against Chief Anthony August because he felt August wasn't keeping in close enough touch with the people. During that first campaign, he had gone to the local MP, Davie Fulton, and asked for advice. Fulton told him to shower the people with promises and he would get elected.

Manuel did so and was soundly defeated. It was the last time that he campaigned "in the white man's way," and it was the last time he lost an election in the rest of his thirty-year political career.

In his 1961 bid for band Chief, Manuel ran what would become his usual quiet but thorough campaign that involved building support from key community leaders then listening to what the people had to say and trying to respond to their needs in practical ways.

His election as band Chief, a post his great-uncles François and William Pierrish had held for most of the first half of the century, was a source of personal satisfaction, but it also added to his already considerable workload. Along with his band Chief duties, he was still working his eight-hour shifts at the mill and serving as an NIC Sachem and the NAIB president, a job that had him on the road for much of his free time.

In his NAIB work, his highest priority continued to be building a united British Columbia Indian organization with the Nishga Tribal Council and the Native Brotherhood. He spent most of the summer and early fall of 1961 organizing a province-wide powwow in Lillooet. The theme of the gathering was the shared heritage of British Columbia Indians, and he arranged for Indian dancers in their traditional clothing to perform for the visitors.

Like the 1959 Kamloops meeting, the Lillooet powwow had a province-wide impact. As *The Native Voice*, the NIB's newspaper, saw it, the powwow made them feel

> once again, that the great Indian cultural tradition is by no means something that belongs to the past, soon to be forgotten. This proud tradition, which is as old as the mountains and valleys of this beautiful country and which has stood like a rock and weathered all storms, is very much alive![5]

Manuel expanded on the theme in his speech where he noted that the "culture of the white people was forced upon us by people who did not understand Indians and who did not give us time to adjust to an entirely new environment. This is the first time in our history," he said, "that our children get the same education as white children and from now on our people will gradually . . . begin to take the place in society that is rightfully theirs."[6] But

along with stirring cultural pride, Manuel used the powwow for a little shrewd politicking by awarding Maisie Hurley, the editor of *The Native Voice*, an honorary life membership in the North American Indian Brotherhood.

The powwow and Manuel's discreet political courtship of Hurley marked another step toward closing the gap between the NAIB and the NB. Manuel's speeches and activities gained an increasingly prominent place in *The Native Voice*.

A speech he made to the British Columbia Nurses' Association, for example, was printed as a three-part article that highlighted Manuel's unity platform and outlined his current thoughts on the role of the modern Indian movement. At the time of European contact, he observed,

> Indians of one language group felt no sense of brotherhood with other Indians. In British Columbia, for example, the Shuswap were quite often at war with the Chilcotin Indians, or the Kootenays invaded the hunting grounds of the Blackfeet east of the Rocky Mountains.
>
> All this has changed entirely. . . . For the first time in all known North American history there exists now an Indian sense of identity and common interest with other Indians, from the icy shores of the Arctic to the burning deserts in the Southwest and beyond.

The new sense of Indianness was rooted in common traditions and a common sense of the land. But it was not at all a backward-looking movement. Respecting the old ways did not mean Indians had to

> go hunting with bow and arrow if we own a rifle or that we go on horseback if we can afford a car or a bus ticket. . . .
>
> It means, on the contrary, a positive, constructive approach. In the first place we wish to preserve our great Indian cultural heritage and we wish to revive the interest in this heritage, because we, as a free people in a free country, have a right to possess it . . . it is our property that has been handed down for thousands of years.[7]

Manuel's speeches around the province and the coverage of his activities in *The Native Voice* brought him to the attention of the British Columbia Indian Advisory Council, a group of five Indians and four whites who were appointed by the provincial government to advise on Indian matters.

The chairman was Chief William Scow, the past president of the Native Brotherhood, and he invited Manuel to take the seat at the table that was long denied Andy Paull because of his differences with the NB. The Council's position on Native issues tended to be modelled on the more conservative Native Brotherhood policies, but Manuel's participation turned

out to be a useful practice round for what he would encounter as the chair of a national advisory body set up by the DIA a few years later.

But while things were moving forward on a political level, Manuel's family situation continued to deteriorate. After years of frustration, Marceline left him.

This gave Manuel the opportunity to display his sometimes mediocre parenting skills. His son, Arthur, remembers being on the road with his father and finding himself let out on the side of the highway outside of Lillooet because his father had an evening meeting to attend and Arthur had school the next day. Neskonlith was a couple of hundred kilometres away, but his father told him to hitchhike home. Only twelve years old at the time, Arthur remembers being surprised as his father pulled away, leaving him alone on the highway without a nickel in his pocket.[8] Arthur made it home, but it was the type of incident that reflected his father's "the hard way is the best way" philosophy and led to a sense of estrangement between Manuel and his children that took many years to overcome.

The family situation became even more complicated when Marceline returned home. Her travels had taken her to Calgary where she lived with a non-Native man for a time.* When she returned to Neskonlith after a year's absence, she brought home a child. The arrival of the child raised a few eyebrows in Neskonlith, but it is a testament to Manuel's traditional sensibility that looked at every child as a gift that he formally adopted the boy, named Richard, as his own son. Richard would go on to become an important part of the community and a respected band councillor.

The gulf between Manuel and Marceline could not be so easily crossed, however. Marceline moved back into the house, but they slept in different rooms. Manuel turned his bedroom into an office and spent most of his time there after working his shift at the mill. The marriage was, for all intents and purposes, over.

It was a case of staying together for the sake of the children. And even here there were problems. Their oldest son, Bob, was going through a rebellious stage that had been aggravated by the years of turmoil in the family. His grades in school plummeted and, to get out of the house, he took a job as a night watchman at a shingle mill and moved into the watchman's shack on the site.

When Bob quit school, Manuel told him to either return to school or come to work with him at the mill. As sons are wont to do, Bob flatly

refused both alternatives. “I’m not going to work for you,” he told his father, “and I’m not going back to school.” Instead, he took off to the Kootenays and went to stay with his maternal grandparents.[9] Realizing that things were reaching an end, Marceline asked George one more time to give up politics and to put his energies into patching things up at home. It was either that or leave her and the kids so they could make a life on their own.

Manuel stopped by to visit Mary Thomas on a rainy night in the early 1960s, just after his wife’s ultimatum. Thomas knew something was wrong as soon as she opened the door. “He looked so pained,” she recalled, “as if the weight of the world was on his shoulders.” She noticed, too, that he had been drinking, but he explained it away as “drowning his sorrows” and told her about Marceline’s warning. He was most upset about what would happen to the kids, who ranged in age from ten to sixteen.

But quitting politics? He hadn’t fulfilled his promise of uniting all the Indians in British Columbia, and now things were starting to move on the national level. And yet the pressures for assimilation, the poverty, the despair were still there at the community level. How could he quit now? And how could he not? The kids were still young, and they needed a father.

Thomas remembers that he seemed “half dead inside,” and when he finished speaking she had no ready answer. She was raising her children alone, and she knew how hard it had been on Marceline. Yet Manuel was like a brother, and she reminded him of their grandfather and the strength that he had given them to face whatever needed to be faced. She believed that Manuel had a calling, and she told him, “You’re not abandoning your children. You are building their future.”[10]

By the time he left Thomas’s house that evening, Manuel’s mind was made up. And so, apparently, was Marceline’s. She didn’t wait for him to move out. She took the kids aside and asked them who they wanted to live with. Her or their father? They all chose to stay with her.

Bob remembered the scene. His grandparents had convinced him to take the train back home. When he got to the station, he was surprised to see his mother and his brothers and sisters gathered on the platform. Marceline had a blanket stuffed with food and a few belongings tied around her shoulders, and all the kids had their bags packed. The image of his mother’s lonely courage on the railway platform would stay with him all his life.

He recalled, “I guess we had two or three minutes, and she didn’t even know where she was going. They just got on the train and they were gone.”

Bob walked back to the house where his father had been left alone. At the time, he felt resentment toward the man and an abiding distaste for his father's political passions, which he believed were responsible for breaking up the family. He stayed in the house with his father and out of necessity went to work with him at the mill. It was there that he began to have a glimmer of understanding of George.

The work was tough, and his father was a skilled and respected worker. It is probably a feature of father-son relationships that the Neskonlith band Chief, president of the NAIB, Sachem of the NIC, member of the British Columbia Indian Advisory Council (BCIAC) and member of the Chase Board of Trade finally impressed his son with his ability to leap from log to log, bust a jam and pike the logs onto the jackladder.

It would be quite a few years, though, before Manuel and his oldest son would reach the point where they would become friends and political allies. Bob worked with his father in the mill for a year, and then hit the road. It was several years before he and his father crossed paths again.

Marceline ended up in Chilliwack where she spent a year working as a domestic worker to support the family. In later years, after her return to Neskonlith, she became active in the community and built a reputation as a woman of spirit, intelligence and compassion in trying to heal the wounds of her people. But during the mid-196os, both she and Manuel were fighting to regain their personal and familial equilibrium. In Manuel's case, the turmoil of the family would be reflected in some odd twists and turns in his political life.

The first came in 1963 when he declined to stand for re-election as the Neskonlith band Chief. Instead, he ran and was elected to the much less demanding position of band councillor. In April he was also re-elected as president of the NAIB in a convention that was attended by the NIC Chief, William Wuttunee; the Native Brotherhood president, Guy Williams; and the head of the Nishga Tribal Council, Frank Calder.

Not surprisingly, the main theme of the convention was Indian unity, and Manuel once again proposed a new province-wide organization. As *The Native Voice* reported:

> delegates pointed out that there are now numerous Indian organizations and that it is essential that a united front be developed in petitioning for various reforms and advances for Indians. As a result, they called for the establishment of a British Columbia Indian Federation with elected representatives to provide a clearing house for concerted action for resolutions and other endeavours.[11]

The clearing house idea was designed to allow the existing organizations—the NB, the NAIB and the Nishga Tribal Council—to continue with their internal structures while also taking part in a federated superstructure. In a sense, what Manuel was proposing was a provincial version of the National Indian Council (which probably explains Wuttunee's presence), but even this approach received only a lukewarm response from Williams and the Native Brotherhood. The continued failure to build a unified front of British Columbia Indians and the growing turmoil at home caught up with Manuel during the fall of 1963 when he made a sudden and still not fully explained change of course. Without consulting anyone, he resigned as the president of the NAIB and joined the Native Brotherhood.

The idea of the greatly respected interior leader joining the coastal Indians' organization sent shock waves through Indian country, and, from his resignation letter, it seems that that was one of Manuel's aims. He had decided that if the NB refused a formal merger with the interior organization and the Nishgas, then he would become a sort of Trojan horse who would lead an invasion from the inside.

In his letter of resignation published in *The Native Voice,* he stated that

> provincial unity for the Indian people is the answer to the unsolved problems which we are facing. Without such unity, there is little we can accomplish.
>
> In the past, we have been led to believe that Coast Indians and Interior of British Columbia Indians had very little in common; that we were 'different' from each other; and it was concluded that the separate groups would have to solve their problems separately, independently from each other.
>
> I, like other responsible Indian leaders in British Columbia and beyond, feel that the need for unity on a provincial level has become so urgent now that steps in that direction must be taken without unnecessary delay.

He admitted that the decision to quit the NAIB had been a painful one on a personal level, but he concluded by urging "all Interior Indians to follow me on the road to a better future for all of us" and to "help one another in a brotherly way, just as our ancestors did in the past."[12] In a later letter to *The Native Voice* he hinted at another reason for his resignation from the NAIB. He was replying to a circular his NAIB successor, Ben Paul, had sent around the province to counter Manuel's suggestion that there were forces within the NAIB that opposed his unity program.

Paul stated that the NAIB had always shown "a perfect willingness to deal with other British Columbia organizations in respect to unity." Manuel

agreed; after all, that had been his policy all the time he was president.

But then he went on to point a finger: “The Brotherhood’s legal advisor conveyed a message to me where he maintained that Indian unity was not desirable and that it would be better if Indians were split up in different organizations.” The legal advisor was Manuel’s friend and former part-time employer, Henry Castilliou Jr., but Manuel stated frankly that Indian organizations should not take direction from their non-Native advisors.

As he put it: “I am a North American Indian and have obligations only to my Indian people, and to Canada. I maintain that no non-Indian has a moral or legal right to interfere with the efforts for Indian unity, which every one of us desires.”[13]

Almost thirty years later, Castilliou doesn’t recall a serious dispute with Manuel over unity or any other matter. But Arthur Manuel remembers that his father and Henry had a stormy argument in the house before George left the NAIB, and Henry Castilliou never set foot through the door again. Whatever the reason for Manuel’s resignation, either as a strategy to bring the NAIB and the NB together or as a result of a dispute with Castilliou, the move did not have an energetic follow-up. Instead of seizing the day and trying to push NAIB-NB to unity from inside the coastal peoples’ organization or attacking the roadblocks to unity from the outside, Manuel disappeared from public view.

Throughout most of 1964, he remained at home in Neskonlith and limited his political activity to local matters. His only major initiative was to start a Shuswap cultural society with his former rival in the band Chief election, Anthony August.

It was a period for Manuel to lick his wounds from his family break-up and his near decade of political battles. For the first time in years, he seriously started to work his farm and tried, among other things, to market green beans.

While Manuel was sitting back and tending his own political and literal garden, things were once again moving on the national scene as the public began to take a new interest in Indian issues.

The spark had come from the civil rights movement in the United States. Many non-Native Canadians (and some Indian leaders) tended to see the Indian struggle as a local equivalent of the American Black movement.

This led, however, to Canadian liberals adopting the vocabulary and the solutions of the U.S. Civil Rights movement and trying to apply them to

Native issues in Canada.

A typical example is a feature article in *Maclean's* in July 1963 where Canada's quintessential liberal journalist, Peter Gzowski, went looking for "Our Alabama." He found it in Saskatchewan where a "white woman" told him that she had been called "Indian lover" in the same tone of voice Southerners use for "N----- lover."[14] The recognition by mainstream Canadians of the very real discrimination that Canadian Indians faced in their own land was long overdue. But the fact that it was being seen in the same light as the American civil rights movement meant that the solutions would also be borrowed from a poorly fitting foreign model. Instead of looking at the basic issue of a fair land base and self-government for the Indian Nations, liberals like Gzowski trumpeted the civil rights movement's panacea of "integration." The word was also increasingly becoming part of the DIA vocabulary with its official newspaper, *Indian News*, churning out articles on the theme of Indian and white kids "Learning and Playing Together" in integrated schools. Putting brown and white kids together in the same classrooms in provincial schools was as far as the department went, however. There was no attempt to answer the repeated calls for Indian-controlled school boards or to alter the distorted European-based curriculum that was being taught.

Still, there was a new wind blowing through the cracks of the DIA fortress in Ottawa. At the top, Colonel Jones was pensioned off and department stalwart Robert F. Battle took over the director's job. In a precedent-setting move, Manuel's friend and colleague, Len Marchand, was appointed as the special assistant to the minister of Indian Affairs. Marchand had been recommended for the post by Henry Castilliou (who had close connections to the Liberal Party); he was the first Indian to hold such a high post in the department. As it turned out, Marchand would end up being "the first of everything," the first Indian MP in 1968 and the first Indian cabinet minister in the mid-1970s.

Another important change in the department came among the lower officials where a few mavericks, like Walter Rudnicki, breached the military-bureaucratic complex.

Rudnicki, who would later become a close friend of Manuel's, had drifted into the Arctic Affairs Department in the mid-1950s. He was assigned to the Eskimo Affairs desk with a staff comprising a former Hudson Bay man and a Native woman, but he had no idea exactly what he

was supposed to do. While Rudnicki was still trying to define a job for himself, he was appalled by the callousness and racism of the bureaucrats working around him. Many Inuit during this period were suffering from famine and a shockingly high number were starving to death, but the Arctic Affairs Department officials were suggesting, in all seriousness, that the Inuit didn't need much food "because they had small stomachs."[15] After six or seven years at Arctic Affairs, Rudnicki transferred to the DIA. "At the time," he recalled, "there was a certain bureaucratic terrorism against the Indian peoples with the department controlling every minute of their lives." But there was also a narrow opening for change within the department because, as Rudnicki put it, the DIA was trying "to pull itself into the 19th century."[16] Rudnicki himself would play an important role in pushing it along with two new programs that would have a great effect on Manuel's life.

The first was a community development program for Indian communities that fit with the broad range of new initiatives of the Lester B. Pearson era. Rudnicki remembers that "the department went along with it because it seemed fashionable." The plan was to train thirty non-Native community development officers and thirty Indian community development workers a year for three years. The officers were to have an academic background and be paired, as Manuel put it, "Lone Ranger style" with Indian community development workers.

The second major initiative was a new consultative body, the National Indian Advisory Board, that the department set up to try to get Indian approval for major alterations to the Indian Act or other matters affecting Indian peoples. Unlike advisory boards in the past, which consisted of "mucky-mucks" like "Gordon Robertson . . . two or three Oblates, the Bishop of the Arctic" getting together to "cluck their tongues and discuss the terrible problem of drinking in Frobisher Bay,"[17] the National Indian Advisory Board would consist almost entirely of Indian leaders.

Later in the decade, Manuel would emerge as the Indian chair of the National Board, but in 1964 what caught his attention was the community development program. He first heard about it at the November 16 meeting of the provincial Advisory Council in New Westminster when a University of British Columbia professor gave a talk on the "Community Development Approach to Indian Problems." The Native Brotherhood president, Guy Williams, attended the meeting and enthusiastically backed the proposal.

Manuel shared Williams's enthusiasm.

Community development, he decided, would allow him to work closely with the people and he would have the resources to get things done in the vital areas of housing, health care and education that had improved little in his years of political organizing.

It would also get him away from home, and he hoped he could put his family difficulties behind him, although, as it turned out, that would not be easy.

Just before his interview for the community development job, Marceline went into the hospital in Coqualeetza to have an operation on her hip. She sent the kids back to Neskonlith for George to take care of, and he was again forced to take over the responsibilities of single parenthood. It was not a role he welcomed, and before long he would be slipping the bonds of full-time fatherhood as he headed off to carry on the struggle at a new level.

George with his children. Back row: Arthur, Richard, Arlene. Front: Doreen's friend and Doreen, mid-1960s.

---

* Doreen Manuel: After much painstaking deliberation, our mom left

our dad because he was, like many Indian residential school survivors, struggling with severe childhood trauma that caused him to behave violently towards her. He would not allow her to take the children, Bob, Vera and Arthur. Back in those days, women had little power in the family. She met a man in Calgary and they lived together. Eventually, dad found her, he phoned her and asked her to come home. He put Vera on the phone to plead with her to come home. She told him she was pregnant and he told her that he would adopt the child and treat the child as his own. True to dad's word, he always treated Richard as if he were his own child. As adults, I asked Richard if he ever wanted to meet his biological father. Mom had told me his name and I offered to help Richard find him. Richard declined, stating that he had a father and loved him very much.

Part II: Building the National Movement

> For the first time in all known North American history there exists now an Indian sense of identity and common interest with other Indians, from the icy waters of the Arctic to the burning deserts in the Southwest and beyond.
>
> George Manuel, 1963

Chapter 6: Community Development and the Arthur Laing Gang, 1965–1967

> The main goal was that they wouldn't be captured by the system and in that way we screwed them up pretty good. Then we let them go and all hell broke loose.
>
> Walter Rudnicki on the Community Development Training Program

For the applicants, the first indication that the community development (CD) program was not standard Department of Indian Affairs fare came during the interview. The questions were set up by Farrel Toombs, a Toronto academic who had been brought in to train the CD workers, and the interview was designed to weed out the type of "bureaucratic terrorists" who had staffed the Department in the past.

One example was the nice Mountie question. Walter Rudnicki said that applicants were asked to respond to a scenario where an RCMP officer comes onto the reserve and takes respondents aside for a friendly chat. The officer explains that an illegal still is operating in the community and causing all sorts of problems, and he asks the CD worker to help him locate it. Aware that they were dealing with a government agency, most of the applicants solemnly promised they would help the RCMP uphold the law. These applicants were thanked for their time and their applications tossed into the waste bin. The CD program under Farrel Toombs would have no room for bureaucratic snitches.

George Manuel had no trouble passing the interview, but he was too late for the first class of thirty CD trainees in January 1965 and had to wait a year for the second session. He did not wait idly, however. His brief political sabbatical ended in the spring of 1965 when he was caught up in the second major DIA initiative of the period, the National Indian Advisory Board. The Advisory Board was set up in 1965 with both a regional and national structure. The British Columbia-Yukon regional council had nine members, with six elected from various geographical zones and three seats reserved for representatives of the Native Brotherhood (NB), the North American Indian Brotherhood (NAIB) and the Homemakers' Club. The purpose of the councils and the national board was to advise the Department on Indian

issues and to study revisions to the Indian Act.

The elections for the Regional Council were held on May 31, 1965. Manuel was chosen to represent the interior Indians, James Gosnel the Nishgas, Ken Harris the coast, Chief Richard Malloway the south, Clara Tiyza the Yukon, and Phillip Paul Vancouver Island.

Although only in his mid-twenties, Paul was already a friend of Manuel. They first met in 1960 when Manuel was head of the NAIB. Paul's South Saanich Reserve had backed the NAIB since the days of Andy Paull and Andy had been a friend of Phillip Paul's family.

In his youth, when he was a boxer in the Buckskin Gloves boxing tournaments in Vancouver, Phillip Paul stayed at Andy Paull's house and developed a great respect for him as a man and as a leader. In later years he came to have the same sort of respect for George Manuel, whom he compared to Nelson Mandela and Julius Nyerere for the leadership he gave his people on both the national and international scenes.

Paul began his own political career in early 1965 when he was elected to head the newly formed NAIB affiliate, the South Vancouver Island Tribal Federation. He remembered that Manuel had urged him to run for a place on the Regional Advisory Council, and then, according to Paul, "politically engineered" his election.[1] With Paul's support, along with that of own political allies in the NB and the Nishga Tribal Council, Manuel was elected to chair the Regional Council and was guaranteed a position on the National Advisory Board.

By the time the first meeting of the National Indian Advisory Board was called, however, Manuel was off to Quebec City's Laval University for his community development training. Before he left, he had to decide what to do with the kids, so he went down to Coqualeetza to visit Marceline. It was a poignant moment for both of them. Coqualeetza was where the two of them had met; now it was where they would decide what to do with their children during their permanent separation.

Amy August, an old friend of the Manuel family, was visiting Marceline at the hospital, and she remembers that the meeting between George and Marceline was a warm one. When George came in, he was full of enthusiasm about the community development job and Marceline seemed genuinely happy for him. She agreed that he should take the course and suggested that they place the younger children in the Kamloops residential school while she was still in the hospital.

George left Coqualeetza grateful for Marceline's understanding and pleased that after the bitter years leading up to their separation there was a hope that he and Marceline could become friends again.

When Manuel arrived in Quebec City, he expected he would be confronted by a bucketful of sociological jargon and a lesson in official form filling. Instead, Farrel Toombs's course was imbued with the spirit of 1960s radicalism. It was designed so the trainees wouldn't "be captured by the system." Instead, their role would be to go into the communities and help the people in "liberating their minds, their souls, their spirits," which had been trampled by almost a century of overbearing Indian agents and the priests who had "beaten and cowed" them into submission.[2] The methods for training the CD workers were as unconventional as the program's goals. Instead of preparing lectures, Toombs came into the class and asked the students what they wanted to talk about. For days nothing was accomplished, and the trainees began to get restless. They wanted to be lectured, to take notes, to be taught. But as community development workers, they would have to learn how to motivate groups into action. Toombs had simply recreated the situation they would face in the field. The frustration level reached the point where Manuel himself wrote home to Anthony August and told him he was considering quitting because the whole thing appeared to be a waste of time.

Then something happened. The students broke down and began to talk about their own experiences in dealing with the system. Academics and seasoned civil servants "began to tell of the frustration that had built up in them when nobody had laid down a clear-cut agenda for them to follow." "Learning, for all of us," Manuel later wrote, "had become a strict set of rules, a curriculum laid down by people who had never met the class, a teacher whose orders were to wade through the course outline . . . and a class filled with students who dutifully made notes, read the texts, counted the footnotes and were prepared to respond with the correct references whenever asked." From the community development point of view, this sort of teaching created "people who saw life, work and their place in the community in pretty much the same terms that had been set down for them in the classroom." Toombs described the system as one of "unilateral dependence."[3] His three-month course was designed to break down that unilateral, authoritarian dependence and replace it with mutual dependence.

In Manuel's case, the community development method made him

rethink his past organizing strategies. He began to feel that while his political activities had demonstrated his concern for the needs of the people, "there had been a tendency for political leadership to become a matter of a few friends developing a platform and selling it to potential supporters." After the community development course, Manuel became "more concerned with trying to find the unspoken focus of the community and the person best suited to articulate that concern."[4] While absorbing some valuable lessons from the CD approach, Manuel also noted a few of its limitations. In the field, he noticed that some of the CD officers took their passive role too seriously and, in George's words, would "sit around and not do a damn thing."[5] He also discovered that the progressive attitude of Toombs and the Department did not extend to paycheques. When Manuel was sent to Cowichan on Vancouver Island, he discovered that his non-Native partner, Tony Karch, was being paid eight hundred dollars a month while he was receiving three hundred dollars. It was a revelation that surprised Karch as well. Manuel was, after all, an older man with a province-wide reputation, so the pay injustice was an embarrassment for both of them.

It did not prevent them from developing a close working relationship, however. Karch says he found Manuel's wisdom and dedication "inspiring," and today attributes their community development accomplishments to Manuel's drive and political savvy.[6]

Cowichan was not, after all, an easy posting. It is made up of five separate communities, all within an eight-kilometre radius of the city of Duncan. The region is prosperous, with the local economy based on agriculture, fishing and logging the coastal rain forests. More recently, the mild climate (*cowichan* means "land warmed by the sun") has attracted retirees who have settled in the town and on the nearby Gulf Islands.

But for more than a century, the prosperity of the area had been denied its original inhabitants. A British Columbia social worker described the conditions he found on the reserve in the mid-1960s.

> The houses are overcrowded and . . . there is no electricity in at least 35% of the homes and the majority of the homes are with no running water and indoor plumbing. There is a high infant mortality on the reserve and out of every 1,000 live Indian births, 74.7 (against 27.2 for the whole of Canada) will not survive. [7]

According to the social worker, the lack of minimum housing standards, indoor plumbing and electricity meant that the Indian children's start on life

was so far behind their white neighbours that it was nearly impossible for them to catch up.

Because of his political reputation, Manuel couldn't slip into the community unnoticed. *The Victoria Colonist* reported his arrival in Duncan in an article that compared him to Sitting Bull, Pontiac and Geronimo. But Manuel knew that even with his province-wide reputation as a fighter for Indian rights, he would have to win acceptance from the local community.

As he put it, "the major defence of any small community against invasion by outsiders is to isolate them." From his experience with coastal peoples, he also knew that "the advantage of my being an Indian could almost be offset by the fact that I was from the interior. Coastal Indian peoples have traditionally taken such a pride in their own culture that they tend to look down on interior Indians, whose way of life is a good deal less elaborate."[8] The most serious disadvantage, however, was the fact that he was an employee of the Department of Indian Affairs. If he was to be allowed to share in the life of the community, he would quickly have to show that he was an Indian first and a DIA employee only by circumstance.

After they moved into a house in Duncan, he and Karch spent a couple of weeks wandering around the reserve to get their bearings.

Manuel's CD training had instructed him to continue to wait until he was approached by someone in the community for help, but he was not the type to sit back and do nothing. So he and Karch drew up a questionnaire about the community's social and economic life and went to the Chief and council for permission to go house-to-house to gather the information.

When permission was granted, they set out systematically to visit every home and virtually all 400 residents of the community to have the questionnaire filled out and to simply chat with them about their day-to-day concerns.

Community member Wes Modeste, then in his mid-twenties, remembers that Manuel had the knack of relating to the people in a very direct and forthright manner. Despite the fact he was an outsider and nominally a DIA employee, Manuel "inspired a kind of immediate trust."[9]

Through this round of informal discussions and their own direct observations, Manuel and Karch concluded that the one issue that could unite and spark the people to action was the same one that had shocked the social worker: the need for decent housing.

There had been attempts by the community to address the problem in

the past with a number of meetings held by the band council's housing committee. But as one Cowichan resident recalled, they turned out to be little more than "bitching sessions" with no followup. To ensure that the discussions led to action, Manuel looked around for someone who could lead the fight.

He settled on Abraham Joe, a member of the council who had worked as a fruit-picker and logger and who had a reputation as a first-rate scrapper. Joe was also the only member of the council who "would tell the agent where to file his ideas of what was good for the community. He was quite capable of elevating words and principles into action."[10]

Joe was, in many ways, typical of the men and women Manuel would recruit to the cause over the next two decades. If he had a choice between someone with academic credentials but little life or practical experience and someone with a willingness to learn and a large dose of life experience, he preferred the latter.

All Joe needed, Manuel believed, was a push to get him started and a bit of guidance along the way. The push came in the form of an off-hand suggestion that Joe look into the housing issue because that was what the people themselves seemed most interested in.

Then he waited. A few days later, Joe invited Manuel to go saltwater fishing with him. They spent the entire afternoon on the boat discussing the housing issue, the problems surrounding it and the possible solutions. Joe had one main concern. He was worried that if he set out on his own he would be seen as usurping the authority of the Chief and the council's housing committee. Manuel told him to gather around him a small number of friends who shared his housing concerns so he would not find himself isolated in any public forum. But as Joe feared, the Chief got wind of his activities and saw the extra-council organizing as a threat to his leadership. To head off the challenge, the Chief called a meeting to censure the young logger publicly.

When Manuel heard the news, he told Joe that he would have to pull an end-run on the Chief by calling his own public meeting to sell the idea directly to the people. To pack them in, he was to go around and tell everyone that if they showed up at the meeting, they would get their houses.

Not surprisingly, it became the largest public meeting ever held in Cowichan. But it got off to a rocky start when the Chief stood up and said that this was the wrong forum for the issue; that the band council already had

a housing committee and that was where the problem had to be addressed.

Someone had to swing the meeting away from procedure and back to the housing issue, so Manuel stood up and announced that he knew where band members could get money to build their own homes. “The money is there,” he told them. “All you have to do is to tap it. But only you can get it.”[11]

Manuel later admitted it was a risky move. The Chief could have had him thrown out because he was not a member of the band, but his forceful personality and his reputation as a provincial leader prevented anyone from questioning his right to speak. By the time he sat down, the meeting was back on track. The people wanted houses, Manuel had said the money was there and they were going to make sure they got hold of it.

Afterward, an eight-member grievance committee was set up, and with Manuel’s help it developed a strategy to get the DIA’s attention and have it fulfil its housing obligations. With the knowledge that the one thing that drove the Department to action was public embarrassment, the committee decided to invite the press to view the housing conditions.

They prepared a press release and sent it to the Victoria and Vancouver dailies, which sent reporters to the reserve to see the promised Third World conditions.

The members of the press were shown extended families crammed into small one-room shacks, a community Elder who was forced to live in a dirt-floored smokehouse, and women trying to care for infants and older children in houses without running water or electricity. In the mid-1960s such glimpses into the living conditions on reserves were rare in Canada, and the Cowichan housing conditions shocked the local journalists. When the story was picked up by the CP wire and sent across Canada, the glimpse into life on the reserve shocked the whole country.

Because of the publicity, the Cowichan band council was able to get the new DIA minister, Arthur Laing, to visit the reserve. They took him on the same tour as they had taken the press, and Laing was sufficiently shamed to promise that the people of Cowichan would get “all the houses they needed.”[12] That was an obvious exaggeration, but the Department did launch a major housing construction program on the reserve. In the first five years, the DIA built one hundred new houses with electricity and water services.

George's children visiting him in Duncan B.C. (back row) Vera, Richard and Arlene. (front row) Doreen, ca 1967.

Over the next ten years, a further 250 houses were added. A member of the housing committee recalled that even after the fifteen-year building program was complete, Cowichan was still short one hundred new houses, but the 350 new units were a major physical and psychological boost to the community.[13] The people gained not only homes, but a new self-confidence and assertiveness.

To put this assertiveness to use, Manuel began leading the members of the committee, and anyone else who was interested, on field trips to Victoria. He would introduce them to MLAs and explain how they could use the politicians to publicize their struggle. Modeste recalls that Manuel even went so far as to physically walk them through the various government departments in a sort of ambulatory civics lesson while he explained how each department was set up and what services it delivered.

Another important program he pushed during this period was adult

education. He had been critical of what he saw as the DIA orthodoxy that was expressed by one official with the comment that “any of those Indians over thirty years old, we may as well forget about them” and “let the present generation die off, then we’ll see the results of our policies.

Manuel saw this approach as not only bloody-minded, but also bad policy. From his own experience, he knew “the education process must last as long as active human life itself. Children don’t change society, adults do.”[14] Adult education, whether it be academic or vocational, gave immediate benefits not only to the community but to the home environment.

This new attitude was of immeasurable importance in reinforcing any positive influences the young received at school. In Cowichan, Manuel put these theories into practice by helping to set up an adult education committee that would target literacy and basic academic skills. Typically, he told the committee that with his grade-two education he had no right to be running the program, so he enrolled in the course to upgrade his own skills.

An offshoot of the adult education committee was the community workshops, which Manuel believed were necessary to improve the community’s skills in coping with social problems. He enlisted a cross-section of people and had them meet once a week to discuss and analyze the past, present and future of the community. Out of this simple process, he hoped people would discover their local problems and the means by which they could be solved.

While he was working on local issues with his CD work, Manuel was also active on the national scene with the NAIB. The first meeting of the Board had taken place in January 1966 when Manuel was still at Laval. As the government set it up, the Board had Indian and non-Indian co-chairs. The non-Indian was the assistant deputy minister, Robert Battle, and the Indian representative was to be chosen by the Board. At that first meeting, Chief Wilfred Bellegarde of Saskatchewan was elected to the post and Manuel was chosen as vice chair.

When Bellegarde lost his band election shortly after the meeting, Manuel automatically became Battle’s co-chair. He did not want to inherit the job by default, however, so he insisted on having his chairmanship put to a vote by the Indian advisors. It was, and he won unanimous support.

The Advisory Board chair position made Manuel one of the best-known Indian leaders in Canada and allowed him to refine his talents as a spokesperson and strategist of the movement. But his first challenge was to

steer the Board toward the Indians', rather than the Department's, agenda.

In this he worked closely with Phillip Paul, who had also been elected to the Board. In private meetings before the hearings, he and Paul recognized that they were likely to "become subjected to the government and controlled by the government" in the official forum. But they also saw that the Advisory Board provided "the first time that Indian people had got together nationally in the history of Canada," and they felt they could use the government money as a springboard to form a national organization that was truly representative of the First Nations. The most useful meetings, they believed, would take place in the hotel rooms before and after the public wrangling with Battle and the DIA crew.[15]

Manuel and Paul's suspicions about the DIA trying to keep a tight rein on the meetings were confirmed when Laing, who had been described by Rudnicki as "a hardware merchant . . . a typical western red neck," opened the first session. He began by suggesting that he was "too old to grow a forked tongue" and explained that his role was to "raise the stature and morale of the employees, who are your servants." The role of the Indian advisors, he said, was to "raise your people, preserve and revive their culture and reconstruct that fine pride and self-direction that had made such a contribution to what we all enjoy in Canada."[16]

Before the Indian advisors had a chance to offer any advice, they were subjected to a long-winded discourse from Battle titled "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," which had as its theme how much the Department had done for the First Nations in the past, how much it was doing in the present and how much it would do in the future.[17]

When the speech was finished, the Department's agenda for the meeting was introduced; it was so pre-packaged that the Maritime representative, Wallace Labillois, complained that the Indian advisors were in the position of an "ant charging an elephant."[18]

What the Department had in mind for the advisors was not a wide-ranging discussion on the conduct of Indian Affairs in Canada, but a very narrow focus on the Indian Act, with the advisors limiting their input to a clause-by-clause, line-by-line review of the legislation.

Still, by working closely with Paul, Manuel managed to find a space in the official agenda of that first meeting for two motions that would broaden the scope of the board. The first called for the minutes of the NAIB to be

sent to the regional councils.

The second asked for travel money for the regional councils (of which all the national board members were part), to allow them to consult the people at the grassroots level.

Behind those two bland-sounding propositions was Manuel and Paul's strategy to make the advisor responsible to the people and to get government funds to continue their organizing activities, both regionally and nationally. Manuel and Paul were planning a meeting in Musqueam, BC in March 1966 to launch the Confederation of Native Indians of British Columbia (CNIBC) as an umbrella organization that would allow the existing Native organizations to work together on specific issues.

In Ottawa, they were using hotel room meetings with other leaders to discuss replacing the NIC with a more dynamic and representative organization.

At the time, the NIC was foundering. Its only real successes had been in the cultural area, but even here it ran into trouble with Mohawk fashion model and political activist, Kahn-Tineta Horn, who had been crowned "Indian Princess" in 1964. Horn immediately became embroiled in a very public dispute with William Wuttunee that ended with her accusing him of misusing NIC funds.

When William Wuttunee had the executive strip her of her title a few months later, she crashed the NIC dinner in Toronto. As *The Native Voice* reported, Horn arrived "robed in a simple, straw coloured piece of cotton, caught over the left shoulder and falling to her ankles. She looked exquisite . . . but most of the two hundred guests, wearing plastic feather headpieces, seemed unconcerned by Miss Horn's arrival or the controversy."[19]

After her appearance, Horn was expelled from the NIC, but the organization quickly found itself in trouble again when Wuttunee accepted $9,000 from the federal government to hold a conference on the government's widely discredited Claims Commission bill, which had called for a government-appointed panel to unilaterally decide on Native land claims. At the conference, the NIC contradicted most of the Indian organizations in Canada by praising the bill as "holding tremendous promise for the Indian people of Canada."[20] As a result, even some opposition members in the House of Commons began to suggest that Wuttunee was working with the Liberals, and by the end of the year, interest in the NIC and its work among Indian leaders had fallen to the point where the organization

was temporarily forced to close up shop. It never regained even the small amount of credibility it had at its launch.

What was needed, the Indian leaders agreed, was a new start in building a Status Indian organization with the leadership coming from the Indian communities. Government travel funds for the NAIB members to organize at the local level were seen as an important first step in launching the new organization.

At the Advisory Board meetings, Manuel and Paul pushed hard on the issue. But the DIA representative, Battle, pushed back. He not only repeatedly turned down the requests, he stated flatly that the role of the board members was to offer advice as individual advisors; therefore, no consultation with the people back home was necessary.

While Battle was stonewalling on the issue, the members continued building valuable contacts among themselves. One of the most important figures to emerge during this period was Walter Dieter, who took over from Wilfred Bellegarde as the Saskatchewan delegate to the Board. Dieter lived in Regina where he had become a successful businessman, but he kept in close contact with his own community, and he combined an unflagging dedication to the cause with the type of amiability and humility that made him an important consensus builder.

Another important figure was Harold Cardinal, then twenty years old and studying at St. Patrick's College in Ottawa. Cardinal approached the Board in late 1966 to ask them to endorse his plan for a Canadian Indian Youth Council.

He had already met privately with Laing with the proposal and a request for $40,000 in funding. Len Marchand, then Laing's ministerial aide, remembers that his boss "really liked Cardinal's spunk," but Laing offered Cardinal only a few thousand dollars to "buy an old car or something so he could travel around and organize the council on his own.[21]

Cardinal found Laing's offer and attitude patronizing, and the following morning he went to the press to denounce the minister. That afternoon, he appeared before the Advisory Board to ask for backing for his Youth Council proposal. Cardinal explained that the Youth Council wanted "the support and advice from the older people" and described his meeting with the minister.

After going over a few of the details of his proposed budget, he explained that he was not willing to accept anything less than his $25,000

administration budget and concluded by announcing that "the Council would attempt to get money from any source, including foreign, governments."[22]

After a brief debate among the board members, Paul moved that they endorse the Youth Council's request for the full $40,000, and the motion passed by a wide margin. But like almost all of the Advisory Board's advice, the funding resolution for the Youth Council was ignored by Laing and the DIA. Cardinal, however, would soon emerge as an important figure in the movement and would play a key role in Manuel's ascension to the national leadership.

The most immediate goal of the advisors remained the issue of funding for the regional councils, and when the Advisory Board was back in session Manuel got together with Paul, Dieter and Quebec's Chief Max Gros-Louis for one last-ditch attempt to have the DIA foot the bill.

Their strategy called for Manuel to begin the session by attacking the regional councils as more of a hinderance than a help without the requested consultation funding, thus putting Battle on the defensive. "The Indians of British Columbia," Manuel explained, "had been trying to organize on a tribal basis or along union lines, but this process had been upset when the Regional Advisory Councils were introduced."[23] He went on to suggest that he would like to take the whole issue of the role of the councils back to the regional level and have them decide on the framework they wanted to set up. Paul then pointed out that "the Advisory Board was responsible to the Regional Councils since the board members were elected from the Regional Councils," and he would like to see "the issues concerning the role of the Regional Advisory Councils and the Board reviewed by the Regional Councils themselves."[24]

It soon became apparent that the continuing criticism from the Board and the persistent demands for consultation funds were taking a toll on Laing, and his public statements became more and more aggressive. He began to hint at dark motives behind the Indian leaders' criticisms of his department, suggesting that "a very large part of the problems we face today are psychological. An aggrieved people sometimes prefer their complaint to a solution."[25]

In February 1967, Laing flew out to a Native Brotherhood convention in Vancouver, and he asked the Indian leaders "to turn away from brooding on the past." He pleaded with them to join him "in a forward movement with all

the help I can muster on your behalf" and promised that "together we can make you free of the bonds of dependency." At the same time, Laing was prone to political panics whenever Indians showed a willingness to free themselves from that dependency. In 1967 what most deeply troubled the minister was the Indians of Canada Pavilion at Expo.[26] George Manuel had been appointed as one of the advisors overseeing the pavilion's storyline, which was written on the pavilion's walls to accompany the murals and exhibits. An Expo Indian Pavilion Advisory Board had originally been set up by the DIA under the leadership of the Mohawk engineer, Dr. Gilbert Monture. The members of the committee immediately revolted, however, and demanded the right to pick their own chair. In the dispute that followed, in which Manuel denounced Monture as "a Westmount Indian,"* Monture was forced to resign.

The spectacle was an embarrassment for the government. In response, Laing appointed Chief Andrew Delisle of Kahnawake as the Commissioner General of the pavilion and allowed input into the pavilion's storyline from the NIAB, the NIC and from a series of hearings that were held in Native communities across the country.

As it turned out, the Indians of Canada Pavilion became one of the most popular at Expo. It still serves in a way that was uncharacteristic of the period as a testimony of a People, their collective memories and their hopes and fears for the future. Visitors were welcomed with the simple message:

> In the beginning, there was the land—the forest, the rivers and the lakes, the mountains and the plains, and all the creatures that walked on the land, flew in the air, and swam in the waters.
>
> And there were The People. Within their horizons they were the total of mankind—all were created by the Great Spirit and the spirit was in all living things.

The only mildly contentious part came near the end where the storyline questioned the validity of the treaties.

> For the Indians, treaties were less a legal instrument than an act of trust. Few could read English or French and the Indian had no written language of his own. He understood how to pledge his honour but he could not sign his name. He was certainly not in a position to judge whether these contracts were equitable, either for himself or his posterity.

The storyline went on to offer the same sort of mild rebuke to the churches for their attempts to wipe out Native culture and to the DIA where "the welfare of the Indian was regarded as proper work for retired soldiers" who treated Indian peoples "like amiable backward children."[27]

When Laing saw the results in a special preview, one DIA official remembers, “he just about shit himself” and said he was going to shut the place down.[28] He was finally persuaded that closing down the pavilion would cause a political scandal, but when he toured it on Indian Day at Expo on August 4, 1967, he described it as “the anguished cry of the frustrated” and suggested that “we must break through this frustration and go on to the better life which lies ahead.”[29]

Laing and the stalwarts in his department could not comprehend that the Indian movement was moving beyond the “we” stage, meaning Indians co-operating with the Department. The day when the Indian leadership was willing to look to the DIA for answers to their problems or even “guidance” was long gone.

Manuel and Paul felt the DIA’s suffocating embrace on Indian Day when they toured the pavilion with Laing and the other invited guests. Among them was a Soviet representative who was interested in meeting with Canadian Indians and struck up a conversation with Manuel. Immediately, a DIA official was at their side. Manuel moved on with the Russian, and the DIA official sidled back up to them.

In exasperation, Manuel signalled to Paul to follow him into the washroom where he explained the situation and asked Paul to “come along and come in between me and the Indian Affairs guy and just block him. And I’ll take off with the guy from the Russian pavilion because he wants to talk to me privately.” They pulled it off, and Paul recalled that the Indian Affairs official was “about ready to have himself.”[30] The manoeuvre was typical of Manuel’s attitude toward the Department during this period. He saw the DIA as an obstruction and a hinderance whose power only came from its control of the purse strings.

His goal was to have Indians controlling their own funds as a necessary first step toward setting their own agenda. As one of his favourite sayings during the period went, “Just give us the gas, we’ll do the driving.”[31] By this time, the ultimate destination Manuel had in mind was sovereignty for the First Nations. In 1968, he spoke the forbidden word in Canada by calling for “independence” for the First Nations with the DIA budget being turned over to the various communities to administer as they saw fit.[32] Such pronouncements by Manuel, who, as a CD worker, was an employee of the Department, were viewed as scandalous by the regional director and his

bosses back in Ottawa. But Manuel was not alone in attracting the DIA's attention. The whole community development staff were increasingly seen by the upper bureaucrats as untrustworthy boat rockers who were part of the 1960s radical opposition to the existing order.

Seeing his universe wobble, Laing began to attack his own program publicly by announcing that "it is not the role of community development programs to create dissension in the Indian communities." More forcefully—and more insultingly to Indian peoples—he claimed that community development was not "a process of agitation and revolt," but a means to "arouse the people from sloth and apathy."[33] For Manuel, the change of heart in the Department led to increasing friction with the local DIA officials who not only frowned on his radicalism but began to question his travel while he was organizing for the CNIBC.

The final straw came in 1967 when Paul, with the support of Manuel and the South Vancouver Island Tribal Federation, fired off a brief to the Department accusing the DIA "of racial prejudice, broken promises and insufficient social welfare."[34]

On January 2, 1968 Laing pronounced: "This self deprecation and self pity has to stop. Living in this world is first of all a personal challenge and the individual who demands attention and then accuses his benefactor of a patronizing attitude is not going to go very far."[35]

For George Manuel and the other CD workers in the field, the pressures from the local superintendents and the return of the Indian Affairs minister and his bureaucrats to the mindset of previous directors of Indian Affairs like Colonel Jones led to a growing frustration. In Cowichan it had reached the point where the DIA came to investigate the local band elections after a group of what they viewed as "radicals" were elected to the council. That enquiry was blocked by the people's refusal to speak to the government-appointed investigator in anything but their own Cowichan language, which he didn't understand. But it was obvious that the Department was determined to crack down on the spirit of rebellion that the CD program was engendering. After two years at the job, Manuel decided that if he was to remain "loyal and committed to the principles of community development" he would be forced to resign from the DIA program.

But where was he to go? He had heard that there was an opening for another job with the Department in Ottawa, but he had had it with the Laing gang. Yet he couldn't devote much time to working for the movement if he

had to go back to eight-hour shifts on the South Thompson River.

The solution to the problem came in a phone call from the brash young Cree Harold Cardinal who had recently won the election to the presidency of the Indian Association of Alberta (IAA). Cardinal told Manuel he had wrested funds to start up an IAA-run community development program in Alberta, and he wanted Manuel to come to Edmonton to train the Indian field workers. There would be no “Lone Ranger” style pairing of Indian and white workers in Alberta. In Harold Cardinal’s plan, Tonto would be running the show.

---

* This is a reference to a well-off area of Montreal and implies that Monture was a well-off urban Indian and, thus, removed from his community and grassroots organizations.

Chapter 7: Down the Garden Path: Chrétien/Andras Consultations, 1968–1969

> Some reserve communities will not produce enough to give all the families who stay a satisfactory standard of living. The government cannot be expected to support such communities indefinitely.
>
> *Choosing a Path*, Spring 1968

In the months before Harold Cardinal's call, there had been a significant change in George Manuel's personal life. It began during one his visits back home to Chase. He was staying with his half-brother Joe and his wife Minnie, and the three of them had gone for a few drinks at the local tavern. When they came home, they put on a couple of Ernie Tubbs records and sat down at the kitchen table with a bottle of whisky until well after midnight.

Later, finding it difficult to sleep, Manuel got up and went into the kitchen to pour himself a nightcap. He was walking down the hall in the buff when he was startled to see a young woman he vaguely recognized looking up at him from the basement stairs. He wheeled around and headed back to his bedroom.

The woman was Anthony August's niece, Marlene August; she had been babysitting Joe's kids in the room downstairs and had decided to stay the night. August, a quiet, shy woman, remembers that afterward she had laughed about her surprise meeting with George, because she had always been a bit in awe of him. After all, Manuel was not only the former band Chief, he was one of the best-known Indian leaders in Canada through his work in the North American Indian Brotherhood (NAIB) and on the National Indian Advisory Board. Seeing him in Joe's hall "buck naked with a bottle of Canadian Club" had given her a much different view of the renowned Indian leader.

The incident led to a great deal of kidding during the weekend, and it wasn't long before Manuel and August became friends.

In the summer of 1968, August went to live with him in Duncan. She was with him when Cardinal's job offer came, and she remembers that Manuel was intrigued by the idea of working in Edmonton for the young

Cree leader.

Since Manuel had first met Cardinal at the Advisory Board meeting, Cardinal had emerged as the rising star of the Canadian Indian movement. In 1968, at the age of twenty-three, he was elected as the president of the Indian Association of Alberta (IAA), and a year later he published *The Unjust Society,* a sweeping indictment of Canada's Indian policy. The book, which began by charging that generations of Canadian Indians had grown up behind "a buckskin curtain of indifference, ignorance and, all too often, plain bigotry," catapulted Cardinal into instant media fame.[1]

Maclean's ran a major profile describing Cardinal on the one hand as "the most persuasive Indian spokesman since Cochise," and on the other as "an educated, vindictive treaty Indian whose ancestors were pushed around, slaughtered and swindled, and who now is out to get what he can for his people."[2]

Cardinal was most effective when he was taking on the dinosaurs at the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA), and Arthur Laing was one of his favourite targets. Cardinal described Laing as "the most notoriously artful minister in the history of Canadian Confederation" for the way he managed to use DIA funding statistics to excuse the shameful neglect of the real problems of Indian peoples.

According to Cardinal, Laing's ignorance of the Indians of Canada "was exceeded only by his arrogance. He had his foot in his mouth so often he surely must have learned to love shoe leather. His idea of a thoughtful solution was to tell Indians to get out and pull themselves up by their bootstraps," but he "never bothered to make sure they had bootstraps."[3]

In articulating the anger and frustration of a generation of young Natives, Cardinal was performing a useful service. But he also made valuable contributions to the strategic development of the movement, and one of his soundest moves was to bring George Manuel to Alberta to head the new Indian-run community development program.

Manuel had proven his leadership ability in British Columbia and on the National Indian Advisory Board, but Cardinal also saw in him a man who had "a very deep sense of pride in his heritage as an Indian. . . . What made him unique for a man of his generation and background was that the State had not succeeded in invalidating his Indian culture."[4] It was this pride in his heritage and his forthright manner, Cardinal believed, that made Manuel

so approachable and why he was held in such high esteem among the other national leaders.

After he began working with Manuel in Edmonton, Cardinal was also impressed by the older man's intellectual depth. He remembers that Manuel "was constantly weighing his experiences, and if there were some new thoughts or new approaches being made, he would try to put them together in his own mind to see how they would work and what the consequences would be. He was what I would call a strategic thinker."[5]

As much as for the CD program, Cardinal needed Manuel's personal and intellectual resources in confronting one of his own domestic problems. At the time, Alberta's two major Indian Nations, the Cree in the north and the Blackfoot in the south, had a relationship that was similar to that of the coastal and interior peoples in British Columbia, with the relatively urbanized Blackfoot tending to look down on the isolated northern Cree. Cardinal himself was often met with suspicion by the Blackfoot. With Manuel working with the IAA, he had a respected national leader who didn't carry any of the baggage of the old Cree-Blackfoot rivalry. So along with setting up the CD program, Manuel was given the job of reconciling the two Native communities.

When he arrived in Edmonton, the $50,000 government grant for the CD program had not yet come through, so Manuel spent some time travelling the province with Cardinal to get acquainted with the Chiefs and the local people. He was impressed with Cardinal's approach. The young Cree leader "went out and listened to the people," Manuel later told Michael Posluns, "he paid attention to their concerns." When the government funding finally came through, Manuel began screening applicants for the CD program. He tried to bring in those who had street-smarts as well as intelligence and commitment to the cause. He then set up regional workshops where he expounded the main principles of community development and warned the trainees about the forces of resistance they would face. As he put it, a real reformer had to demand changes "which may prove unpopular in certain quarters. Organizations for change will almost inevitably generate conflict; hopefully, in a country such as ours, this should not necessitate violence." He later added that "if the powers that be are not listening and remain too attached to the structures they have created, then sometimes the emerging groups find no other recourse."[6]

Much of his training work involved pep talks that urged his workers

never to give up the struggle.

> You have a right to control your future. You must gain a voice in politics, in the economic field and the social field of your communities. You will run into a lot of jealousy, a lot of opposition; but don't give up. And if ever you should fail, don't worry. It's not a real failure, because you still will have learned. So just try again.[7]

The idea of using every failure and every success as a learning experience had become a feature of Manuel's way of looking at things. He knew that the struggle would be a long one and that one of the main enemies would be the sense of defeatism caused by the lost battles. To inoculate himself and others against this reaction, he refused to acknowledge defeat. Everything was "a learning experience" on the road to the ultimate triumph of the Indian struggle.

During this period, Manuel was also looking more closely at the self-image problems of his people. In Alberta, just as in Cowichan and Neskonlith, he found that one of the most insidious effects of the decades of oppression was to make many people ashamed of their own Indianness. In his own family, he had discovered the extent of the problem years earlier when he had taken his children for a rare visit to his mother's place in Kamloops and Maria had powdered the kids' faces to make them look whiter.[8] He hadn't said much at the time, but by the late 1960s it came to symbolize in his own mind the need to restore to the people their pride in themselves.

At the time, another oppressed minority in North America—Black people in the United States—were undertaking their own experiments in self-esteem building. Manuel and Cardinal decided to head south to see what they could learn. They travelled to the Black ghettos in Chicago where they met with local activists and studied the Black pride programs.

On the same trip, they went further south to visit Navaho reservations to examine their pioneering Indian education system. They wrapped up their tour in New York where they looked at special minority training programs and visited various offices of the United Nations.

At the U.N. they met with people from UNESCO, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization. Both Manuel and Cardinal were impressed by how similar the goals were of the North American Indian struggle and the anti-colonial struggle elsewhere in the world. Manuel filed the information for future reference.

While they were in the U.S., however, rumours began to circulate back

in Canada that Cardinal and Manuel were meeting with Black Panther leaders. Ottawa was already receiving RCMP reports of links between the Front de libération du Québec terrorist group and the Panthers, and there were concerns at the DIA that the Indian movement would merge with other self-styled revolutionary movements in North America and take up arms to address their grievances.

In those turbulent times, the idea of an Indian uprising was beginning to get serious attention across Canada. Ross Thatcher, the premier of Saskatchewan, was warning that a time bomb was ticking among the Indians of his province, and Don Mazankowski warned the government in the House of Commons about a plot to train Canadian Indians in "riot techniques."[9]

Cardinal himself had done nothing to dispel these suspicions. In *The Unjust Society* he stated that current organizing

> represents the final attempt by Indians to try to solve their problems within the context of the political system of our country. If it fails, and particularly if it is destroyed by the federal government, then the future holds very little hope for the Indian unless he attempts to solve his problems by taking the dangerous and explosive path travelled by the black militants of the United States.[10]

Cardinal was referring to a move to build a new national Indian organization. In late 1967, the leaders of the NIC had gotten together with many of the National Indian Advisory Board members and agreed to disband their group to pave the way for a new organizing effort that would result in the emergence of two new organizations: one for Status and one for non-Status Indians.

The non-Status Indians formed the Métis Council of Canada (MCC; forerunner of the Native Council of Canada). The Status Indians launched the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB). The founding meeting of the NIB took place in Ottawa in early December 1967. Manuel was still in Edmonton, but he was kept closely informed on the developments by Cardinal and the large British Columbia contingent, which included Guy Williams, Gus Gottfriedson, Victor Adolph and, most significantly, Phillip Paul.

In all, twenty-eight Indian leaders from across the country attended the meeting, and Cardinal recalls that there was a feeling of history in the making. It was, he suggests, "the first time since colonization that Indian people came together, not organized by outsiders."[11] Walter Dieter, the amiable Saskatchewan Cree, was elected to chair the meeting. The NIB's

priority was to avoid the mistakes of the National Indian Council (NIC), which had its mandate diluted by an amorphous structure that included individual as well as organizational memberships. Unlike the NIC, which had concentrated on basic human rights issues, the NIB would put its focus on the collective struggle based on an alliance of the existing provincial and territorial organizations, which in NIB jargon became known as PTOs.

This alliance structure was most strongly backed by the leaders of the highly developed prairie organizations. Cardinal in Alberta, Dieter in Saskatchewan and Dave Courchene of the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood all felt that "the people with the primary responsibilities were the leaders at the local level and the provincial organizations . . . because of the amount of work they had done in building their organizations."[12] In other words, basing the NIB on the provincial and territorial organizations was first and foremost a simple recognition of the reality of the time. The NIB had no intention of usurping the local organizations that had been painfully developing their own structures for decades and were closer to the people and their immediate needs.

With the broad strokes of the organization drawn, a nine-member executive was selected to draft the NIB constitution. Dieter was chosen as the provisional president with Courchene as his vice president.

The remaining executive positions were filled by Harold Cardinal, Guy Williams, Phillip Paul, Gus Gottfriedson, Bob Charlie (Yukon), Harold Sappier (New Brunswick) and Omer Peters (Ontario).

After the elation of the founding meeting came the realization that the NIB existed only on paper and that it would remain in that flimsy state without a funding source. The government had supplied a small amount of money in early November to help pay for travel expenses to the founding meeting, but they would need much more to get the organization off the ground with office space and a staff. The executive had decided to go after core funding from the government the way Cardinal had done for Alberta's community development program. In the meantime, Dieter was forced to return to Saskatchewan and take out a second mortgage on his house to provide the NIB with $55,000 in start-up funds.

With his own money backing the organization, Dieter moved to Ottawa with a vague mandate to get things started. He rented an office apartment and tried to attract young people to the cause. He found fertile ground in Ottawa where the DIA had recently instituted a program to hire Indian

university students. In the summer of 1968, dozens of Indian students were working in various jobs for the department. Christine Deom, one of the students, remembers that Dieter would stop by to see the Indian students at the Traviata Tavern where they hung out or visit them at their apartments and sit on the floor and speak to them about the national struggle. At the time, she remembers, Dieter was "running the NIB out of his suit pocket. Literally. He would start checking his pockets and say, 'I have a letter somewhere here from Indian Affairs that says . . ."[13] As a result of Dieter's efforts, a number of those students were drawn into the movement and stayed in Ottawa to help build the organization.

Manuel was following the NIB launch from Edmonton where he was busy giving his CD course and engaging in political work in the south. His personal life was also full. He began his second family in January 1970 when Marlene gave birth to a daughter, Martha. The couple was also joined in Edmonton by Arthur who, like his older brother Bob, still had some resentment from what he saw as his father's abandonment of his mother and the rest of the family.

Like Bob, Arthur had lived through a turbulent adolescence. He had been placed in the Kamloops residential school during his mother's hospitalization, and he and some friends went AWOL with a vague idea of hopping a freight train to Toronto. Unfortunately they were asleep when the train pulled into Calgary. They were caught by the CN police and ended up in the city jail. Even though Arthur was only fifteen years old, he was given twenty-five days in jail or a twenty-five-dollar fine; because he was broke, he had to serve the time.

He called his father from the jail, and Manuel said something to the effect of "You got yourself into this, you get yourself out of it."[14] It was, Arthur recalls, another instance of his father's "the hard way was the best way" child-rearing philosophy. In this case, though, George waited until Arthur had some time to think things over, then sent the money for the fine and a bus ticket on the condition that Arthur return to school.

By the time Arthur joined his father in Edmonton, he was eighteen years old. Unlike his brother Bob, who had sworn off politics in his younger years, Arthur immersed himself in the writings of Malcolm X, the Black Panthers, Cuban revolutionaries and members of the Red Power movement in the U.S.

With this type of ideological intake, he began to look on his father as something of an "establishment" figure, and political arguments were added

to the day-to-day family disputes.

Arthur did have a glimpse of the softer side of his father during this period, though. In June 1970, word came from home that Manuel's mother, Maria, had been hit by a car in Kamloops and had died from her injuries. Manuel and Arthur drove to Kamloops together for the funeral. Arthur remembers that a few miles out of Edmonton, his father asked him to take over the wheel while he climbed into the back and sat without saying a word. He stared out of the window at the late spring rains and contemplated his often painful memories of his mother.

Maria, Manuel knew, had not had a happy life. After she left Neskonlith and settled in Kamloops, her confidence and sense of herself and her people began to ebb, and she started drinking heavily. Manuel had seen his mother only a few times over the previous decade, and he had never really overcome the estrangement from her that he felt as a child. Her sudden death ended any hope he might have had that they could reconcile their differences.

George with his son Arthur, ca. 1968.

Shortly after his mother's funeral, Manuel began to look at his own record as a parent and to realize some of his shortcomings. It was perhaps inevitable that he would have difficulty in his family relations. Over his

forty-eight years, he had survived the rejection by his mother, two years in a residential school, a long painful battle for his life against TB, a dozen years booming on the river and a dozen years on the road as a political organizer and leader. And he had done it all by sheer grit—the hard way is the best way.

His children with Marceline recall that, while they were growing up, their father seemed to have a protective shell around him that none of them was able to pierce. After Maria's death he was still committed body and soul to the cause, and he was still the sociable guy who would get up and play his banjo and sing a song at a party. But he also began to put some effort into raising his second family with Marlene and in trying to patch up things with the children he had with Marceline and to become more open and accessible to the people closest to him.

* * *

In early 1968 the founders of the NIB envisioned a slow and measured drive to build the organization. But while the first halting steps toward launching the NIB were being taken, they found themselves with a new slate of opponents in Ottawa and a new set of challenges to face.

In April 1968, when the NIB was just a few months old, the federal Liberal Party elected Pierre Trudeau as its leader and, by extension, as the new prime minister of the country. Trudeau called an election for June 25, and the Liberals won a majority government. The Trudeau era, which would stretch well into the 1980s (with only a brief Conservative interregnum in 1979) had begun. This period would offer the Indian movement some of its greatest gains along with a few of its most painful setbacks.

For the first six years of the Trudeau government, their point man in the battle with the Indian movement was Jean Chrétien, who was appointed minister of the newly named Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (IAND) shortly after the June election. (For many years to come, people continued to refer to it as the Department of Indian Affairs or DIA.)

Indian Affairs hadn't been Chrétien's first choice. He had been working with Mitchell Sharp at Finance and hoped he would be appointed Canada's first French-Canadian finance minister. He recalled that during the 1968 campaign someone in British Columbia had asked him, "what will the policies of the Trudeau government be for the Indians of Canada?" Chrétien's reply was typical of his style: "Do you want a frank answer? I

don’t know a damn thing about it.” Everyone laughed. Three weeks later Trudeau invited him to become minister of Indian Affairs.

Chrétien mentioned those remarks to Trudeau when the Indian Affairs cabinet post was offered, but Trudeau, the Outremont aristocrat, replied that Chrétien represented a “similar background. You’re from a minority group, you don’t speak much English, you’ve known poverty. You might become a minister who understands the Indians.”[15]

The 1968 election also saw Len Marchand elected to the House of Commons as the first Status Indian MP. Marchand’s replacement as the special assistant to the Indian Affairs minister, Bill Mussell, was also a familiar face to George Manuel. Genevieve Mussell’s son Bill had graduated from the University of British Columbia School of Social Work in 1957 and had worked with the NAIB and as the director of the Vancouver Indian Centre. Henry Castilliou, still acting as the Liberal Party talent scout, had recommended him as Marchand’s replacement at Indian Affairs.

The other important new figure in the Department during this period was Robert Andras, who was attached to the DIA as minister without portfolio in charge of new initiatives. In this case, the new initiatives were the round of cross-country consultations that Arthur Laing had introduced in late 1967 as a way of going over the heads of what he saw as his unruly Indian advisors.

At the time, Laing promised that the consultations would lead to a new Indian Act that would “provide for the emancipation of Canada’s reserve Indians.”[16] He then sent to every reserve in the country a booklet called *Choosing a Path* that asked thirty-four questions about the course the government should take in its future Indian policy.

Choosing a Path soon became known as *Down the Garden Path* in Indian country because it seemed to point toward gutting the entire reserve system. Among other things, the booklet suggested that “some reserve communities will not produce enough to give all the families who stay a satisfactory standard of living. The government cannot be expected to support such communities indefinitely.” It then went on to suggest that many Indians would have to leave the reserve and “choose between the conveniences and demands of modern life and some of their own traditional attitudes.”[17]

As Cardinal pointed out, “Indian leaders shuddered at the thought of a dialogue with the Honourable Mr. Laing,” but in the short term his

replacements weren't much better.[18] Chrétien and Andras carried out Laing's *Choosing a Path* consultations with a vengeance. While the Native leaders were still trying to draw up a constitution for the NIB, they found themselves in the middle of a consultation blitz that began with Andras visiting Yellowknife in July 1968 and moving at a hectic pace to Toronto, Fort William and Sudbury on what was purported to be a cross-country sounding of Indian opinion.

In those first weeks, Andras received a decidedly mixed reception. In some places, Indians were curious about the new process, but in other areas, such as in the far north, he was greeted with a pint of beer poured over his head and the suggestion that Indians would choose their own path without DIA interference.

Andras's most difficult receptions came in Edmonton, where Cardinal refused to meet with the minister until he had consulted with his people, and in British Columbia, where Manuel returned for the consultations to serve notice that the British Columbia Indians would not be railroaded into any new DIA scheme.

Both Manuel and Cardinal were concerned that the hurried pace of the consultations and their narrow focus on the thirty-four questions of *Choosing a Path* were masking a hidden DIA agenda. They feared that if Indian peoples didn't have time to reach a common position on the main issues, any discord would be used by the DIA to justify whatever course of action they had already privately decided on.

Manuel's greatest fear, which he discussed with Phillip Paul, was that Chrétien wanted to declare Indians "equal" to other Canadians and abolish the reserve lands, which had been the official Liberal policy from Jack Pickersgill in the 1950s to Laing in the mid-1960s.

These suspicions were given more weight on September 28 when Chrétien announced a major reorganization of the DIA without consulting a single Indian organization. The fact that the minister would make such a move when his government had pledged to work closely with Indian peoples suggested that the DIA was moving along its business-as-usual track.

As expected, Indian leaders denounced Chrétien for the move, but to his surprise, he also came under fire from Robert Andras. On September 29, Andras publicly criticized Chrétien and the Department's unilateral reorganization in a nationally televised interview.

After opposition MPs began joking about a "tribal war" in the DIA

between “the minister and the real minister,”[19] Andras was forced to back down. The impression this left with most Indian leaders was that they were facing a good cop/bad cop strategy, with Andras playing the former and Chrétien the latter.

Manuel confronted the good cop, Andras, when he returned to British Columbia to chair a consultation meeting in Nanaimo. Before the DIA team arrived, he and Paul hatched a plan to seize the initiative from the department and return the consultation to the people. Their first move was to meet with the delegates who would be at the hearing and to draw up a brief that outlined a common position on the Indian Act. When the government consultation began, they would submit the brief then use the rest of the meeting to discuss Aboriginal rights. If the DIA officials objected, they would walk out of the meeting.

As it turned out, Andras didn’t arrive until the second day of the consultation. The meetings began with the regional superintendent, Jeffery Boys, announcing that he would be the chair for the moment and asking the delegates to introduce themselves. Before the introductions began, Paul was on his feet insisting that the election of the chair be the first item on the agenda.

When Boys tried to sidestep the issue, Paul announced that the delegates had agreed to hold a meeting *in camera* which would take the rest of the morning. The delegates then filed out and left the DIA people cooling their heels for the next three-and-a-half hours.

When they came back to the hall, Manuel had been elected chair, not co-chair as Boys had proposed, and he announced to Boys that a brief had been adopted by the delegates. After it was read into the record, Boys found his department under attack from the floor for its failure to uphold its fiduciary responsibilities toward Indian lands and Indian hunting and fishing rights. Boys replied with an odd speech about Indians being “free to sue and be sued, free to go where they wished as citizens of Canada”[20] and denied that there was any guardianship relationship expressed in the Indian Act.

Paul suggested that the whole meeting was a waste of time without Andras present and called for an adjournment. Manuel proclaimed the session closed and announced a private meeting among the Indian delegates for that evening.

The next day, Boys made an effort to bring the meeting back to the Indian Act, but once again Paul stood up to call for an *in camera* meeting.

When the delegates returned, Manuel announced that they had decided “to terminate discussions on the Indian Act” because they believed their brief covered the main points on the proposed changes.

Clearly flustered, Boys decided to wait until Andras arrived before making any further attempts to push the DIA’s agenda. When Andras showed up, Boys told him how the consultation was slipping out of control and the minister wisely decided not to try to force the issue. He acknowledged Manuel as the legitimate chair of the meeting and accepted the delegate’s brief as the official word on the Indian Act.

When he responded to it, he did so diplomatically. The brief was, he said, “the best I’ve seen in the sense that it’s very easy to follow,” but there were some things that “other Indian people in other parts of the country might not agree with.” One problem for Andras was the call to remove the discriminatory section in the Indian Act that stripped a Native woman of her Status if she married a non-Native—something Manuel had always insisted on.

Andras said that he personally agreed with the idea of taking out the discriminatory clause, but he thought other Indian groups might disagree. What Andras had most trouble with, however, was what he called “the price tag” on settling the British Columbia land question. When dealing with the cost, he said, “I want to come before you quite honestly. I know my colleagues would say, it’s a very large price tag and we may have to face this over many, many years, quite a few years if it’s huge.”[21] The Indian leaders had not, in fact, expected much more in the way of concrete results from the meeting. What they wanted to do was to use the consultation to send a message to the government: If the Department wanted to consult with the Indian leadership, it would have to do so from the floor rather than from the podium.

If there was any doubt in the matter, it was dispelled during the final national consultation meeting that was held in Ottawa from April 28 to May 5, 1969. The meeting had originally been scheduled for the early spring, but the Indian leaders had convinced Chrétien to put it off so they would have time to prepare a common position.

Working behind the scenes, Cardinal, Manuel and the NIB leadership came together and agreed to reject the government’s agenda for studying the Indian Act. Instead, as Manuel had done in Nanaimo, they would use the conference to attack the paternalism of the DIA and then steer the discussion

toward the land issue.

It is a measure of Manuel's stature in the Indian community that when the five-day national conference opened on the morning of April 28, the forty Indian delegates from across Canada chose him, and not the provisional NIB president Walter Dieter, as their chair.

As soon as Manuel gavelled the session open, it quickly became apparent that the politicians were in for another rough ride. Cardinal stood to challenge the Department's organization of the conference and the delegate distribution. Then he announced that "the Alberta people had given a clear instruction to the Alberta delegation that the Indian Act was not the issue and that they should talk only of their rights—rights that had been denied to them for over a hundred years." He went on to state that the Indian Act was only "a symptom of larger problems that existed—namely paternalism"—and that "the delegates from Alberta had not come to suggest things that the government wanted to hear, but to tell the government and the people of Canada what the Indian people of Alberta wanted."[22]

For the next four days, the conference oscillated between a forum to hold Chrétien's feet to the fire and a kind of informal NIB meeting where the presence of the DIA officials was more or less ignored.

The most important accomplishment was the establishment of a new body that the main figures in the NIB had designed in evening sessions in their hotel rooms. The new organization was called the National Committee on Indian Rights and Treaties (NCIRT). It would begin a major research project on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and, eventually, act as a negotiating body with the government on behalf of the First Nations.

At first the NCIRT was to be set up as a separate organization, but when Chrétien pointed out that it would be difficult to answer funding requests from both the NIB and the NCIRT, the delegates agreed to establish it as an ad hoc committee of the NIB. They then presented Chrétien with a bill for over a half a million dollars to fund the Committee's country-wide research. Chrétien greeted the request with raised eyebrows and agreed only to study the matter.

Andrew Delisle, who had founded the Indian Association of Quebec in February 1968, was elected to head NCIRT; it would be his job to pry funding from the department. After the May 1969 consultation meeting in Ottawa, however, he had little success getting to see the minister. At the time, Chrétien was busy putting the final touches on his White Paper, which

would set a new Indian policy for his government. The paper was to be tabled in the House of Commons in June, on the first anniversary of Trudeau's election victory, and it promised to blaze a completely new trail in Canadian-First Nations relations.

When it was released, however, it read as if it had been secretly put together by Laing as an act of revenge on the leaders of the National Indian Advisory Board for making his political life so uncomfortable.

Or going back further, it contained echoes of Duncan Campbell Scott's objective of working for the day when "there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department." Among the First Nations, the White Paper caused such a shock that it instantly united them in opposition to it and lifted Manuel into the leadership of the NIB as the one man Indian leaders thought capable of blocking the Trudeau-Chrétien assault on their historic rights.

Ironically, Chrétien would later claim that one of his greatest accomplishments in the Indian Affairs portfolio was the promotion of Indian unity. But Manuel later remarked that Chrétien's claim as the father of Indian unity could be compared to "Dwight Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles claiming credit for the success of the Peoples' Republic of China."[23]

Chapter 8: From White Paper to Red Paper, 1969–1970

> We couldn't believe it. He was transferring everything to the provinces and washing his hands of the Indians. And he said he had consulted with us. That was bullshit.
>
> Dave Courchene on the Chrétien White Paper

As George Manuel and Harold Cardinal had feared, Jean Chrétien already had his own agenda before the consultations were under way.

As early as September 20, 1968, Chrétien had told an Indian-Eskimo Association audience:

> It is possible that the Indian people will decide that there should not be an Indian Act at all. They might decide that they do not want special legislation. There would then be required some transitional legislation which would transfer federal responsibility for the land to the Bands and individuals. On completion of the process, the Act would pass out of existence.[1]

What Chrétien hinted at in September 1968 was exactly what he delivered to the House of Commons in June 1969. To a visitors' gallery packed with Indian representatives, and to the 200 other Indian leaders in the capital awaiting the new policy, Chrétien announced that the government had decided to relinquish its trust position toward Indian lands, turn the services for Indian communities over to the provinces and disband the Indian Affairs department over a five-year period.

As compensation, the government would appoint a claims commissioner and launch a five-year $50 million economic development program for the poorer reserves.

The White Paper would, however, effectively end Indians' special status in Canada. Their national territories would be reduced to real estate, and the federal government would rid itself of its obligations to the people of the First Nations.

Dave Courchene's reaction—that Chrétien's consultations had been a fraud—was shared by Indian leaders from across Canada. Walter Dieter issued a press release from the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) that charged that the result of the government proposal would be "the destruction of a nation of people by legislation and cultural genocide."[2]

Over the next week, telegrams from Indian bands and associations poured into Indian Affairs blasting the government for its unprecedented attack on their Aboriginal rights.

Cardinal, who had refused to go to Ottawa to hear the speech, compared the policy to the physical genocide of earlier generations.

"The Americans to the south of us used to have a saying: 'The only good Indian is a dead Indian', but Chrétien had amended this to read 'The only good Indian is a non-Indian.' "[3] Manuel didn't even have to look to Canada's neighbours for historical precedents. He compared it to the "Mackenzie King policy, which said, in effect, 'Indian or Canadian, and never the two shall meet.' "[4] Manuel's observation was reinforced in the aftermath of the White Paper when the prime minister suggested that the Indians of Canada had enjoyed a "special status" in the past, but they were now at a crossroads and it was time to "decide whether the Indians will be a race apart in Canada or Canadians of full status."[5]

While rejecting the idea of Aboriginal rights, Trudeau admitted that the government would have to honour Treaty Rights, but only for the time being. The treaties, he said "shouldn't go on forever," because it was "inconceivable . . . that in a given society one section of the society have a treaty with the other section of the society."[6] The idea that the government planned to eventually abrogate its Indian treaties was fuel for the White Paper fire, uniting and mobilizing the First Nations in a way that had never happened before.

Chrétien greatly underestimated the forces that were ranging against him. His first tactic was to send his bureaucrats across the country to find individual Indian leaders who agreed with his position. Then he would defend his policies by claiming that the Indians themselves were not united on the issue and suggest that his White Paper policies were the only way out of the deadlock.

It was an old Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) ploy, and it had often worked in the past—but this time it failed miserably. On reserve after reserve, in province after province, the DIA officials not only were unable to enlist support for their new policies, but often found that local leaders refused to meet with them. In Alberta, Cardinal went as far as to direct the people to "if necessary forcibly exclude federal officials from Indian lands."[7] By mid-July, the only Indian leader in Canada who had spoken out

in favour of the new Chrétien policy was his fellow Liberal MP, Len Marchand.

Marchand had backed the main principles in the proposal in March, when he told the House that "there should not be special status in Canada for any group of people. There should not have to be special laws saying that I am an Indian. We are all Canadians."[8] In a major Parliamentary debate on the White Paper, Marchand echoed this stand by stating that

> a lot of these things that are embraced in the policy are things for which the Indian people have been asking. We have been asking ourselves, are we going to be treated as children for the rest of our lives or are we going to take on the responsibilities of adults?

As the extent of the opposition to the White Paper became clear, however, even Marchand began to backtrack. In the House, he spoke of the fears of the Indian peoples that the new policy would lead "to a constitutional change which will turn over the responsibility for Indians to the provinces. . . . I plead with the minister to look at this matter very carefully and clarify it so that it will be clearly understood."[9]

Chrétien took Marchand's advice and began a clarification offensive. In the fall of 1969, he explained that "at root of much of the reaction of Indian spokesmen to the proposals is distrust of government and serious misunderstandings as to what the proposals mean." To enlighten the Indian leaders, he began a series of speeches explaining what the proposals were "not." Chrétien announced that

> the statement is NOT a final policy decision to be implemented regardless of what anyone else says.
>
> The Statement does NOT propose or suggest that Indian reserves should be abolished.
>
> The Statement does NOT propose that the provincial government should take over responsibility for Indian land.
>
> The Statement does NOT propose to disregard treaties and end them unilaterally.[10]

While the minister droned on about the NOTs, he must have been aware, or certainly should have been, that his own department was acting in direct contradiction to its central thesis that the White Paper was not a firm policy decision.

Two *Winnipeg Free Press* reporters who studied the period discovered that in August 1969, Chrétien's assistant deputy minister, John MacDonald,

circulated a letter to his staff that stated that the White Paper contained, along with proposals that were subject to modification, "certain principles, which are incontrovertible."[11]

The DIA had also enlisted seven public relations firms from Halifax to Vancouver to sell the proposals and hired William Wuttunee, the former head of the National Indian Council (NIC), for 200 dollars a day to lobby reserve Indians on the government's behalf. Wuttunee's ideas had never been far from official DIA policies. As early as 1959, he backed John Diefenbaker's Indian citizenship bill because "in the age of rocketry and sputniks . . . it is incumbent upon us to look to the new and forget the old." According to Wuttunee, the lucky Indians were those who had "rubbed shoulders with white civilization," and he believed that assimilation and the abolition of Indian reserves would solve the Indian problem.[12] Ten years later, his ideas hadn't changed. But those of the Indian peoples had. When Wuttunee tried to spread his good news in his home province of Saskatchewan, he was promptly disowned by the Chiefs of ten bands in the Battleford area and he was refused entry to reserves across the country.

Wuttunee did not take this rejection lightly. He sat down to write *Ruffled Feathers*, a stinging condemnation of the Indian leadership at both the national and provincial levels. But by the time the book was published, Wuttunee was largely a forgotten figure, and his attacks on his fellow Indians were ignored by both Indians and non-Indians.

In fact, all the energies of Canada's Indian leaders were dedicated to building the NIB up to a position where it could lead a nationwide fight against the White Paper.

This strategy was in evidence during the July 17–19 NIB meeting at the Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg. The *Indian News* reporter described the meeting as "one of the most crucial meetings of Indian leaders in Canada,"[13] and it was an indication of things to come that once again Manuel, and not Dieter, was chosen to chair it.

The reporter was Dave Monture, the nephew of Gilbert Monture. He recalled that at the outset some of the Indian leaders wanted to have him ejected from the room because *Indian News* was a DIA publication; they didn't want anyone remotely connected to the government present. But Manuel intervened and told him, "go ahead and report. It's better for the government to know how people feel."[14] Within a few years, Monture was

working directly with Manuel and became one of his key supporters.

At the time, Monture wrote that he was impressed with the “able chairmanship” and “rallying power” of Manuel, although at that meeting very little prodding was needed to move the delegates. The room was permeated by a feeling of crisis as the delegates pondered the disastrous effects the White Paper could have on their lives, their children’s lives and the future of their Nations.

They decided that one strategy to block the White Paper’s implementation would be to build an alliance with the provincial premiers. It would be up to them to accept the new costs entailed in the federal transfer of jurisdiction over Indian social services to the provinces. The NIB already had one provincial ally in the NDP premier of Manitoba, Ed Schreyer, who met with the delegates in Winnipeg and promised not to accept the new responsibilities without the approval of the Indian peoples.

The two largest provinces, Ontario and Quebec, had publicly supported the White Paper transfers, but there was hope they would change their positions. The main targets, however, were the western premiers who were reportedly worried about the cost of delivering provincial services to their large Indian populations.

After agreeing to lobby the premiers, the delegates decided they would collectively refuse to speak to “any government task-force member on any new policy until the Indian people made their own studies and drew up a set of concrete policy proposals of their own.”[15] The delegates then turned their attention to internal matters, specifically to the NIB’s constitution. They agreed that the role of the organization would be to act as a “national spokesman for the PTOs [provincial and territorial organizations] throughout Canada,” and to ensure “the enforcement and fulfilment of all Indian treaties and of the Aboriginal rights of Indians.”[16] The new definition of “national spokesman” was an important expansion of the NIB’s original mandate to act as coordinator of provincial and territorial bodies. The change reflected the realization that only a national organization with real powers could hope to derail Chrétien’s White Paper Express.

Even in its infancy, the NIB wasn’t free from internal politicking, however. Dieter’s leadership was quietly questioned because it was believed he was too easygoing to lead the White Paper battle effectively. At the

Winnipeg meeting there was an open challenge to his leadership from the National Committee on Indian Rights and Treaties (NCIRT) chairman Andrew Delisle. But Delisle had some cumbersome political baggage of his own.

There were rumours he had links to the federal Liberal Party and fears that he would be out of control if he added the NIB presidency to his NCIRT chairmanship. The suspicions about Delisle intensified when the government awarded him and the NCIRT $300,000 to carry out land claims research. Delisle was able to use the money to open a large office in Ottawa and hire a staff of experts. More important, he was responsible for disbursing land claim research funds to the provincial organizations, and this could give him incalculable political clout.

Dieter responded to Delisle's surprise leadership challenge in Winnipeg with an odd speech that began by reminding his friends that all he had started out with was $61 and "and a resolution to organize the Indians of Canada," and he said he had tried to find money for Indian peoples with no strings attached.

> The money I gave to them, telling them all I wanted was their receipts. I told them I don't want the bills or anything, this money is your business—if you gather together and all get drunk, at least there's one thing you'll have done—you'll have gotten together.[17]

Dieter's appeal to the more prosaic instincts of the executive was probably not necessary, however. Like Courchene, most of them were worried that in Delisle's NCIRT they had already "created a monster."[18] The fear was that NCIRT would rise up and swallow the NIB whole, so they reluctantly backed Dieter at the Winnipeg meeting—just to keep Delisle at bay.

But as soon as the meeting was over, the provincial leaders again began to look for a more acceptable replacement for Dieter. While they searched, the NIB remained in a precarious financial state. The organization had received only $20,000 in government grants to pay for travel expenses and rent halls for conferences. There was no core funding to open and staff an office, and the NIB was forced to use a donated corner of the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood office in Winnipeg as its official home.

At the time, even the non-Native Indian and Eskimo Association was getting more funding than the NIB, and there was a sense that the Department was trying to isolate the politically orientated NIB while it used

the NCIRT as a negotiating partner in carrying out the provisions of the White Paper. This fear increased when the Department responded to the NIB boycott of government talks by appointing Lloyd Barber, the vice president of the University of Saskatchewan, as the claims commissioner to horse trade with Delisle on the land issue. The NIB was being frozen out.

Without funds and with the leadership issue up in the air, the organization was left in limbo. So Manuel turned his attention to British Columbia where he and Phillip Paul were taking advantage of the White Paper crisis to realize their long-standing goal of bringing British Columbia Indians together into one organization.

The two men had recognized the possibility of using the White Paper as an organizing tool as soon as it was released. As a member of the NIB executive, Paul was in Ottawa at the time, and he shared in the shock of Indian leaders across Canada at its contents. He remembers that he and another British Columbia activist, Don Moses, saw the document as "the ultimate in assimilation," and they sat up all night in their hotel room trying to figure out what they should do about it.[19] They decided to call an all-Chiefs conference, but when they returned home, they found that Manuel had already beaten them to the punch. He had called Chief Denis Alfonse of the Cowichan reserve and had urged him to send a letter to the British Columbia Chiefs announcing an all-Chiefs meeting in Kamloops in October to discuss setting up a province-wide organization to fight the White Paper proposals.

Alfonse's letter received a positive response, and Paul and Moses joined with him to promote the October meeting. Paul and Moses spent the entire summer on the road visiting nearly every Indian community in British Columbia to speak about the urgency of a united British Columbia organization to fight the White Paper proposal. They found very little urging was needed. In British Columbia, as elsewhere in the country, fears about the White Paper ran deep within the grassroots, as well as among the leaders, and for the first time since the Allied Tribes was founded fifty years earlier, there was a willingness among British Columbia Indians, both coastal and interior, to work together.

Manuel's hand in organizing the October meeting was reflected by the fact that it was held on his home turf at the residential school in Kamloops. One hundred and seventy Chiefs answered the call.

Manuel was elected to chair the conference with Paul assuming the

unofficial leadership from the floor. Paul began with a sombre warning. "The history of disunity in this province gave birth to this conference . . . and depending on the outcome of this conference is the future of your children and mine."[20]

Before the three-day meeting was over, the Chiefs had voted unanimously to found a province-wide organization called the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. The Union would have a three-tiered structure. At the top would be a three-person executive that was responsible to a regional council of Chiefs. The regional council was in turn responsible to the annual assembly of Chiefs.

The first executive was made up of Victor Adolph, Herbert Maitland and Phillip Paul, although Paul was recognized as the organization's unofficial leader.* The creation of the province-wide organization was a dream come true for Manuel. Early in the new year he had been approached by Moses and others and asked to return to British Columbia to "give some direction" to the Union, and he had tentatively agreed to do so; but first he headed off to Ottawa with the Alberta delegation for a special meeting of the NIB to give a national endorsement to Alberta's Red Paper.

The Red Paper was Alberta's formal response to the White Paper. It had grown out of the same sort of painstaking process of consultation at the community level that Manuel had used for his Aboriginal Native Rights briefing in 1960.

The hundred-page paper was officially titled "Citizens Plus" from a quote in a DIA report that stated, "Indians should be regarded as 'Citizens Plus'; in addition to the normal rights and duties of citizenship, Indians possess certain additional rights as charter members of the Canadian community."[21]

Most of the Red Paper was devoted to a clause-by-clause refutation of the White Paper, but the Alberta Chiefs also included a scathing indictment of the general direction of the government's policies, which offered a future where the Indian peoples "would be left with no land and consequently the future generation would be condemned to the despair and ugly spectre of urban poverty in ghettos."

The White Paper, the document stated, had been an insult to the Indian peoples, and the consultations that preceded it had been a cruel joke with no one in the Department listening to what the people had said. "Even if we

just talked about the weather," the Red Paper charged, the minister "would turn around and tell Parliament and the Canadian public that we accepted his White Paper."[22]

The Alberta counterproposal called for an immediate halt to the implementation of the White Paper until the Indian peoples were consulted about their ideas on changes to the Indian Act. The Alberta Indians also demanded a transfer of funds to the Indian peoples so they could run their own education system and receive formal recognition by the government of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

Soon after the Red Paper was released, the NIB adopted it as their official national position and arranged to have it presented to the prime minister and the entire cabinet in a formal ceremony on Parliament Hill.

The fact that Prime Minister Trudeau and the cabinet had agreed to meet with the Indian leadership was a reflection of how well their anti-White Paper campaign was working. It was also an important historic milestone. As Cardinal observed,

> In the 1940s our leaders had to be content with meetings with Indian agents at the local level. In the 1950s, they had upgraded the level of contact to what they used to call regional superintendents of Indian affairs. In the sixties, they had been brought, as a result of the advisory committees, to the level of the director of Indian affairs and, occasionally, the minister. In the late 1960s, that had been upgraded to more contact with the two ministers as opposed to relying on bureaucratic channels.

The presentation of the Red Paper "represented the first time that Indians could sit down and have substantive discussions with the prime minister and his cabinet. Diefenbaker and Pearson only met with Indians as photo-ops when they put the feathered headdress on."[23]

The 200 Indian leaders who gathered in Ottawa had their own appreciation of the usefulness of photo-ops, and a large portion of the NIB's June 2–3 meetings were devoted to planning how to give the presentation its greatest impact.

As usual, Manuel was elected to chair the meeting, and after the provincial delegations formally adopted the Red Paper as joint IAA-NIB policy, discussion was directed toward the ceremony. It was planned to the smallest detail; the Indian leaders even held a rehearsal the night before to make sure there were no slipups.

As Manuel recalled, "it was a life-and-death situation. The whole future depended so much on how the government was going to react to

it."[24] As it turned out, the ceremony went off without a hitch and had an even greater impact than the organizers had hoped. The meeting began with Prime Minister Trudeau introducing the members of his Cabinet and Dieter introducing the Indian representatives. Then the NIB launched its *coup de théâtre*.

After a brief prayer by a Blood Indian Elder, two prairie Chiefs in ceremonial dress stood up and approached the cabinet table. One handed a copy of the Red Paper to Prime Minister Trudeau, the other handed a copy of the White Paper back to Jean Chrétien because "We have our own set of ideas as to what the Indians should be doing for themselves, and we have come up with a proposal. We do not need this any longer. Our people do not need the Indian policy paper."[25]

Then it was Courchene's turn. He explained that

> this past year, like the past hundred years, has been most difficult for our people. But unlike the past hundred years, this year is not ending in frustration and anger. We have, for the first time in our history, joined together as one. . . . The government of Canada has had one hundred years to prepare its White Paper. We have had but one year to prepare our views. We now have but one hour to meet with you. This hour is one hundred years. . . . We hope that this will not be our last hour.[26]

The presentation seemed to move the prime minister and his cabinet (with the possible exception of Chrétien who was being invited to eat crow), and the discussions that followed took on a respectful tone on both sides. Cardinal was applauded by the delegates, observers and even some of the reporters when he spoke of the historic importance of the meeting, and the prime minister was cheered when he admitted that after all the work on the White Paper, "the Indian people have looked at this and they have said, it's not good." Trudeau then went on to share the blame with his Indian Affairs minister by admitting that

> We had perhaps the prejudices of small 'l' liberals and white men who thought that equality meant the same law for everybody, and that's why as a result of this we said, "well let's abolish the Indian Act and make Indians citizens of Canada like everyone else. And let's let Indians dispose of their lands like every other Canadian. And let's make sure that Indians can get their rights, education, health and so on, from the governments like every other Canadian." But we have learnt in the process that perhaps we were a bit too theoretical, we were a bit too abstract, we were not, as Mr. Cardinal suggests, perhaps pragmatic enough or understanding enough, and that's fine. We are here to discuss this.

Trudeau then made an emotional plea:

> You can say that the government doesn't understand, that it's dumb, that it is stupid or ignorant. Perhaps all these things are true, at least in part, but don't say we're dishonest and that we're trying to mislead you because we're not. We're trying to find the solution to a very difficult problem that has been created for one or two hundred years.

The prime minister reflected on his recent tour of Southeast Asia and Eurasia where he claimed he found Māoris in New Zealand doing well without any special legislative protection and the Malays in Malaysia with a great deal of protection doing poorly in comparison with the ethnic Chinese settlers. He then hinted that the White Paper was finished and said his government was "not looking for any particular solution." But he warned that "the ultimate arbitration body is not going to be some court or some commissioner, or some committee of the Senate and the House of Commons. It is going to be the Canadian people. And these are the people you've got to convince."[27]

The meeting broke up with a promise of future meetings and a sense on all sides that a new era in Canadian government–First Nations understanding was now possible. But Manuel was still skeptical. After the presentation he told Dave Monture that he had mixed feelings about the whole thing. Despite the government's fine words, he feared that the DIA would still try to "move full speed ahead" on implementing the discredited policies.

Later Cardinal agreed that the elation most of the Indian leaders felt after the presentation was misplaced. He compared the public humiliation of Chrétien to bringing down a grizzly bear, but they had failed to finish him off. In a very short time, the grizzly revived and came after them, "madder and wiser."[28]

Cardinal and the other western leaders still believed that the NIB under Dieter was not up to the challenge of battling the wounded Chrétien. So only days after the Red Paper presentation, they met secretly in Drumheller, Alberta to choose Dieter's replacement. At the meeting were Cardinal from the IAA, Dave Courchene from the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, Dave Ahenikew from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians and Manuel. For the Western leaders, the sole item on the agenda was to convince Manuel to run against Dieter at the NIB's August meeting in Vancouver.

Manuel initially refused and explained that he had already made up his mind to return to British Columbia and work with Paul in building the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs.

But Cardinal and the others persisted. Manuel, they believed, had the tact and toughness, the sharp political instincts and the respect of Indian leaders across the country that would enable him to spearhead the fight against Chrétien.

"Because of his lifelong involvement with the Indian movement," Cardinal and the others felt that Manuel

> was familiar with the issues that were important to people with Aboriginal rights. Because of the time he spent with us in Alberta, he had also developed an understanding of the issues important to treaty people. And so with that kind of complete background he was the best man for the position.[29]

Equally important was Manuel's ability to relate to the people at the reserve level, an ability that many of the urban Indian leaders lacked. If the White Paper was to be stopped, it would take the involvement and commitment of the grassroots, and no one could better stir the people into action than a genuine man of the people like Manuel.

During the meeting, the Shuswap leader continued to plead his commitments to the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs but, as Cardinal put it, "We asked him, and we coaxed him to run and kept at him until he agreed." Even though Manuel was uncomfortable with the idea that to open up the NIB leadership they would first have to find a way to dump Dieter, he finally relented and agreed to run. They all knew that "Indian politics was the hardest kind of politics"[30] because it so often involved competition between friends and, at times, even family.

Dieter was a friend, but the fight against the White Paper was more important than friendship. If Dieter had to be cast aside for the good of the movement, so be it.

After the meeting, Manuel decided it would be good idea to disappear for a time while the western leaders engineered Dieter's ouster. He headed south for a short vacation in Mexico where he could recharge his batteries and ponder the direction he would take the NIB.

On his way south, he stopped off to see his son Bob who was working in the orchards in Washington. Bob was going through a difficult time. He had been picked up for a driving offence in British Columbia a few months earlier and faced a thirty-day jail sentence or a $250 fine. He was young and broke, so he skipped out and headed south where he found a job in the orchards similar to the one his father had had twenty years earlier.

They discussed Bob's legal problem, and his father advised him to return to British Columbia and see Paul, who was then running the Native studies course at Camosun College on Vancouver Island. They also talked about the family, and George Manuel tried, for the first time, to set things straight between him and his oldest son.

The meeting went a long way to repairing old wounds, and before he left George gave his son a copy of Cardinal's book, *The Unjust Society.*

Bob Manuel read it after George left, and for the first time in his life he began to see the Indian movement not for the personal toll it had taken on his family's life, but in the way his father saw it, as the struggle for the liberation of their people.

When he finished the book, he packed his bag and headed up to see Paul. Paul convinced him to enrol at Camosun and promised to help him with his legal troubles. He then called a friend at the John Howard Society who went to the prosecutor and explained the situation. Taking into account that Bob Manuel was still in his early twenties, that he had turned himself in and that he was enrolled in college, the prosecutor agreed to suspend the charges.

Paul then took Bob under his political wing, and the younger Manuel became an eager student. He started to hitchhike to meetings around the island and sit in on Paul's strategy sessions. Like his father fifteen years earlier, Bob had been bitten by the political bug and would gradually find a prominent place for himself among the new generation of Indian leaders.

On his return from his Mexican vacation, George Manuel was ready to lead the national fight against Chrétien's White Paper. When he met with Cardinal in Edmonton, he was told that the western leaders had arranged what has been described as "a constitutional coup" to remove Dieter and open up the president's job for Manuel.

The former South Thompson River boom man was about to become the leader of the First Nations of the country, and he would need all his log-rolling and jam busting skills to hold the young movement together and move it forward toward its goals of recapturing political and economic independence for the First Nations.

---

* Paul Tennant has pointed out that Phillip Paul was often referred to as the "chairman" of the UBCIC even though the post did not officially exist. *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics*, p. 155.

Chapter 9: The National Chief

> If Indian people have access to different departments of government, they can start playing one branch against the other. . . . The Indians can come up better for that.
>
> Doug Sanders, NIB legal advisor, 1971

The device the Western leaders used to force a leadership vote for the National Indian Brotherhood's (NIB) assembly of August 21–23, 1970 focused on a delay in the filing of the organization's incorporation papers. Walter Dieter had been elected for a two-year term at the Winnipeg meeting in July 1969, but the NIB bylaws hadn't been ratified or the official papers filed until a special March 26–27, 1970 meeting in Montreal. Dieter's 1969 election had thus taken place before the NIB was legally in existence, and the Western leaders used that loophole to force a new vote.

At the time, the NIB was structured so that each provincial territorial organization (PTO) received one vote for every five thousand people it represented. British Columbia's large Indian population gave it a sizable block of votes, and George Manuel began to travel quietly through the province to test support for his presidency.

Clarence Jules, an old friend of Manuel's and the Chief of the Kamloops band, remembers George suddenly showing up at a Union meeting in Prince Rupert. In the hotel room after the meeting, Manuel told them about the suggestion made by Harold Cardinal and the other Western leaders that he run for the NIB presidency and asked them what they thought of it. He let them think it over until they were on the plane back to Vancouver. Then he told them that he had already agreed to stand for the position and that he wanted their support.

As expected, he was promised the backing of virtually every Indian leader in British Columbia. He could also count on the support of the Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan leaders who had convinced him to run. To get the support of Ontario, he and the western leaders got in touch with Omer Peters, a respected leader in the Union of Ontario Indians who had worked with Manuel on the National Indian Advisory Board, and offered him the job of NIB vice president on Manuel's ticket, which Peters accepted. To seal this British Columbia-Ontario alliance, Fred Plain, another Ontario leader, was asked to nominate Manuel for the presidency.

When the delegates arrived in Vancouver on August 19, Dieter knew nothing of the forces aligned against him, so he made no objection when Manuel was elected to chair the meeting or when the prairie leaders moved a motion declaring the Vancouver meeting the first annual assembly of the NIB.

Instead, Dieter went on with his president's report where he outlined what he saw as a limited role for the NIB in the Indian movement. He told the delegates that he would hate to see the NIB overshadow the provincial organizations. "I feel that we should keep the NIB in as small a capacity as we can get it but still be able to call the resources of public opinion of Indians across Canada to put pressure on government for anything that Indian people at the grassroots level need."[1] Interestingly, Dieter's approach to the NIB—as a creature of the PTOs—was echoed by Cardinal when he suggested that "first of all in Alberta we are very conscious of our jurisdiction."[2] Cardinal asserted that the NIB had no business in matters related to education or health, and he didn't want to have the NIB even studying them in its committees.

At the time, Cardinal's restricted definition of the NIB's role passed without comment, but the role of the NIB would soon be a cause of some disagreement between him and Manuel.

The leadership vote was held the following day, August 21, and three candidates were nominated: Walter Dieter from Saskatchewan, Noel Doucette from Nova Scotia and George Manuel from British Columbia.

To Dieter's surprise, Manuel was swept into the presidency on the first ballot. The Saskatchewan leader, who had mortgaged his house to give the NIB start-up funds, suddenly found himself out in the cold, and he was

wounded by the unexpected rejection.

It was an awkward moment for everyone in the room. Sensing this, Manuel kept his acceptance speech short and low-key. He thanked the delegates for the confidence they had shown in him and promised to "guide the National Indian Brotherhood towards the achievement of its stated objectives." Then he called a meeting of his executive council to plan a new direction for the organization.[3]

The first order of business was a decision to close the NIB office in Winnipeg where they were three months behind in the rent and the phones had been cut off. The new NIB headquarters would be in Ottawa where the national Indian leadership would be close to the corridors of power.

To his chagrin, Manuel also learned that the young organization was already $38,000 in debt and that his only staff would be his vice president, Omer Peters, and two secretaries who would be transferred from Winnipeg.

The debt problem was further complicated when, out of a sense of guilt for dumping Dieter, the executive passed a resolution agreeing to pay his salary for the next year. Financial necessity caused them to rescind the offer a few weeks later, and Dieter's salary, which wasn't actually being paid anyway, was officially terminated in September.

At the end of the meeting, Cardinal agreed to pay Manuel's salary from IAA funds while Manuel was struggling to put the NIB on an independent financial base.

Along with heading an indebted organization, Manuel would have to quickly face the challenge of reining in Andrew Delisle's National Committee on Indian Rights and Treaties, which was beginning to swell to unwieldy proportions. In the fiscal year 1970–71, the NCIRT received $550,000 in government funds, $358,000 of which was to be disbursed to provincial research organizations. As George Manuel diplomatically put it, "the NCIRT and the [National Indian] Brotherhood—they were like two organizations. I felt my first responsibility was to bring these two together."[4]

As soon as the executive meeting ended, however, Manuel found himself making an unscheduled trip to Ontario after Omer Peters and Fred Plain insisted he accompany them on a tour of their province. Manuel told them he had no money for travel and said that if they wanted him to make the trip, they would have to pay his way. The Union of Ontario Indians did

pay his way down, but they didn't have any money for his return trip. So Manuel found himself stranded in northern Ontario without a dollar in his pocket; he had to contact Cardinal in Alberta to send him money to get back to Edmonton.

It was an inauspicious beginning to his term in office and a signal of how precarious his financial position was as NIB president. When he contemplated the large debt and his lack of staff, he resisted the move to Ottawa that the NIB executive had mandated. At one point he is even reported to have gone to the executive and advised that the NIB be declared bankrupt and closed down.

The executive rejected the proposal, and after three months of stalling, George, his wife Marlene and their infant daughter headed east in his Toyota. When they arrived in the capital, they rented a small walk-up apartment in Aylmer, on the Quebec side of the Ottawa River.

George and Marlene were happy to find they had a view of the Gatineau hills out their window—the scene reminded them a bit of the hills behind Neskonlith—but they did not have enough money for furnishings, so for several months they lived in the empty shell of the apartment.

Manuel's work arrangement wasn't much better. He was operating out of a borrowed corner of Delisle's NCIRT office at a time when he was supposed to be bringing the NCIRT under control. After a short time, however, he found the fears about the Quebec leader had been exaggerated. While Delisle could be a tough political operator, he was committed to the cause, and he and Manuel got along well. If Delisle had had dreams of usurping the NIB's authority before Manuel arrived on the scene, he showed little inclination after the Shuswap boom man showed up at his door.

In the long run, Manuel would have more difficulty from his own provincial organizations than from Delisle. The first issue of contention was the relationship between the NIB and the government. The idea of the NIB meeting with various ministers, instead of dealing solely with the gatekeeper at Indian Affairs, was one of Manuel's political priorities. In the wake of the Red Paper presentation, the Trudeau government had agreed to the NIB request for a permanent mechanism to facilitate meetings with various cabinet ministers. For the Indian movement, this was one more important step in their struggle to gain access to the country's centre of power.

News that Manuel was beginning exploratory sessions of the joint NIB-Cabinet Committee was not universally welcomed, however.

In a reflection of the federal-provincial tensions in the larger society, the NIB had a constant pull and push between the national office and the provincial organizations, and many of the provincial leaders feared that the NIB-Cabinet Committee would allow for too much centralization of power within the NIB.

To try to allay the provincial leaders' fears of NIB domination, Manuel began an exhaustive series of cross-country travels.

Including two foreign trips (covered in Chapter 11), he logged more than one hundred thousand miles in his first ten months in office as he met with provincial and local leaders to spread the message that the NIB was their organization and to assure the skeptical that he would make it responsive to their needs.

It was a pattern he would keep up throughout his six years as the NIB president. He would spend a good third of his time on the road, meeting the people in formal and informal settings, urging them on to greater political action and gauging their reaction to the NIB and its work. As Henry Castilliou Jr. had discovered a decade earlier, Manuel had a knack for walking into a room of ten strangers and leaving with ten friends. This personal touch became a central element in his leadership style at the NIB.

What he found in his initial travels, however, were broad disagreements about the role of the NIB. These problems were complicated by the great disparities, in both numbers and experience, of Indian organizations across the country.

The most powerful bloc among the PTOs was the prairie bloc that had put him into power. Ontario and British Columbia had large Indian populations, but in both cases the unity of their organizations was still in a fragile state. Quebec and the Maritimes had relatively small Native populations and new and largely inexperienced organizations, while the northern territories had large Indian populations, but weak organizations.

To address both the disparities in the movement and the confusion over the NIB's role, Manuel called an executive council meeting in Ottawa in late September. He announced that he was going to "test the structure of the NIB" and hoped they would not be tied down by too many restrictions placed on them by the PTOs.

What was bothering him was that the NIB had been "given a mandate

but has no machinery to work with." He told his executive that "if you are giving us responsibility, we want equipment to go along with that; otherwise, we cannot do the job you want us to."[5]

Manuel also brought the executive into a discussion over the funding problem. There was a reluctance to go hat in hand to the DIA where, it was feared, every dollar would have a string attached to it. The idea was to get funding from various federal government departments for housing and health services, the same way the provinces did. Doug Sanders, a young lawyer George Manuel had seconded from NCIRT, outlined the strategy:[*]

> If Indian people have access to different departments of government, they can then start playing one branch against another; this really concerns Indian Affairs here as they have been able to go ahead without an effective check. . . .What happens when there are four or five departments concerned? The Indians come up better for that.[6]

Manuel decided to put the case of federal money to the Indian organizations on the same level as transfer payments to the provinces. He looked, for example, at Prince Edward Island, where the entire population was less than half that of the 260,000 Status Indians in Canada, and the island's land mass was only a fraction of the size of the total reserve lands. PEI received almost five times as much in federal payments as Indian peoples; the comparison was one that he would use again and again in the years ahead. It turned out to be an effective counter to Indian Affairs boasts that they were spending all those millions in programs to help the First Nations.

The initial focus of the NIB's funding drive was the Privy Council Office, which was beginning to take on a kind of grab bag funding role in the government for special programs and organizations. The NIB was one of the first to line up at the withdrawal window.

After a great deal of behind-the-scenes negotiation with the Privy Council officials, George Manuel and the executive drew up a $1.7 million budget for the PTOs, with a further $259,000, representing one dollar per Status Indian, for the NIB's operation. When the budget was officially submitted to the Privy Council, Manuel warned that "the urgency of the situation demands that this payment should be made within ten days."[7]

As it turned out, the timing couldn't have been better. At the Red Paper presentation, Trudeau had promised regular consultations with the Indian organizations, and Manuel was able to point out to the government

bureaucrats that any discussions with Indian leaders would be as meaningless as Arthur Laing's Advisory Board sittings if the Indian organizations didn't have funding to carry out consultations with their people.

The government agreed. Six weeks later, funds were released, although not in the amounts that the NIB had asked them for. Both the PTOs and the NIB budgets had been cut in half and, as the Indian leaders feared, the cheque came with a pointed note that read: "If after the consultative mechanism becomes operative it develops that you do not have sufficient money available to finance that aspect, we will be prepared to review the situation with you with a view to requesting additional funds."[8] In other words, those additional funds would be tied to the NIB playing ball with the government. Even though Manuel still feared that Chrétien was trying to push the policies of the White Paper on them under a new guise, he had no choice but to accept the money. To ensure that the government understood that he was accepting the cash, but not their directives, he set a tough tone in his speeches by attacking the attitude that the First Nations were getting some kind of gift from the government.

"When Arthur Laing was minister of Indian Affairs," George Manuel recalled,

> he once said something to the effect that the Canadian taxpayer was spending $127 million dollars on the Indians and the taxpayer deserved a better return on his investment. Well, that statement is only partially true. The Canadian taxpayer did not spend a penny on the Indians of Canada—however the Canadian taxpayer did make available, through parliament, $127 million to the Department of Indian Affairs. The $127 million was then spent by the Department of Indian Affairs, and Mr. Laing was only correct about one thing, you're damn right the Canadian taxpayer deserves a better return on his investment.

The NIB leader then went on to demand that Canadians

> stop referring to my people as *our* Indians. We are not your Indians. We don't need you identifying with our cause—we need you attacking one of the base roots of our problem—a stifling, condescending, paternalistic attitude. . . . If you can't attack the root causes of paternalism and racism on your own . . . then get out of our road and don't slow us down by jumping on and off the band wagon.[9]

While Manuel was serving notice that the First Nations would henceforth look after their own affairs, he was also busy putting the Privy Council money to use in setting up the new NIB office just a few blocks from the Indian Affairs building. As soon as the phones were hooked up, he

began putting together his staff. Before January 1971, his staff in the NCIRT office had consisted of Omer Peters and the two secretaries who had been transferred from Winnipeg. His budget only allowed him to hire another secretary, but what he needed was an executive director, someone who could help him put together a solid team and then run things when he was on the road.

Fortunately for Manuel and the NIB, one of the most capable people for the job happened to be living in Ottawa at the time. Marie Smallface Marule, a Blood Indian from Alberta, had just completed three years working in Zambia as a Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO) (an organization that works to eliminate poverty and inequality) volunteer. She had all the academic qualifications for the job as well as a strong personality and a quick and incisive intellect. Her years in Africa had also given her a decolonization perspective along with a Marxist strategy on the Native struggle that had been rare in the Indian movement in the past. She and her partner, Jacob Marule, an exiled Black South African activist, had important connections to the African embassies and the left and trade union-backed organizations in Ottawa.

George and Marie immediately hit it off on a personal level. When Marule came to his office in October 1970, Manuel began by admitting that, officially, he only had a job for a secretary. Marie showed she could be as forthright as George when she replied, “Fine, but I don’t type and I don’t take shorthand.” Manuel smiled and told her she was hired.

Marule began working at the NIB in the first week of January 1971. Over the years, she and Manuel developed a mutual respect and close political allegiance that would last until the end of his life.

Marule recalls that she was taken by him from the start. “George Manuel had a lot of presence. He had an international awareness and political astuteness. I was also surprised that he wasn’t worried about my radicalism at the time. It was easy to talk with him because he was incredibly bright and extremely well read. He was a prolific reader and he had a natural ability to analyze. He was also a great listener and could pump people for what they knew.”10

By the same token, it would be difficult to exaggerate Marule’s importance to Manuel. In many ways she played the same sort of role in Ottawa—that of trusted confidant, advisor and unquestionably loyal friend and political ally—that Phillip Paul played in British Columbia. Paul

remembers that in his frequent visits to Ottawa, the three of them got along "like three peas in a pod in terms of politics. We could sit down and have supper and talk about the whole gamut of national and international questions and how the Indian movement fit into the larger picture."[11]

The second most important person Manuel hired during this period was Ron Shackleton. A six-foot-five Mohawk, Shackleton was one of the Indian students who was hired by the DIA in 1968 and who gravitated around Walter Dieter. Shackleton was an intelligent and committed man with a gentle soul that earned him the respect of all who knew him. Manuel made Shackleton his special assistant and then had Shackleton's wife, Christine Deom, a Mohawk from Kahnawake, seconded away from her job at Indian Affairs to work with them at the NIB.

Manuel next brought in Jamie Deacey, who also became involved with the movement from a government hiring program. Deacey wasn't Indigenous; he was the son of one of the most influential bureaucrats in Ottawa, a man who had held senior positions with every prime minister since Mackenzie King. Deacey had been knocking around town, working for the Queen's Printer and trying to decide what to do with his life when he met Marion Young, who was working for the NIB and the NCIRT as a librarian.

Young and Deacey eventually married, but when they were going together, Deacey hung out at the Traviata with her and the other Native students. When the NIB hired summer students in 1971 with an Opportunity for Youth grant, Deacey was hired to set up the office equipment.

Deacey had decided to return to university after the summer, but he got a call from Manuel in early September asking him to come to work at the NIB as a special assistant for communications. He was surprised by the offer but didn't hesitate to cancel his university plans and return to the NIB.

The reason Manuel wanted Deacey was largely for his family connections and his firsthand knowledge of the political lay of the land in Ottawa. Deacey would be useful in guiding him through the complicated tiers of the Ottawa power structure.

The office continued to expand throughout 1971, and by the fall it numbered more than a dozen people as well as the four people working for Delisle in the NCIRT. In April, Manuel had met with Delisle and worked out an agreement where the NCIRT staff would be put under the

supervision of Marule and would report directly to her.

In those early months, the emphasis was on research. In quiet defiance of the provincial leaders who wanted to limit the power of the NIB, Manuel assigned his staff various portfolios—housing, economic development, social and cultural development and education—to find out what the real requirements of the Indian people were and then to try to devise strategies for wresting control of each of those dossiers from the DIA bureaucracy.

The workload was considerable, and the example Manuel set with his own work habits demonstrated that the NIB and the Indian movement had to be your whole life. If he was lying awake at night thinking of some problem and he needed information from staff members, he would call them up at four in the morning and ask them. If they couldn't answer right away, they were expected to have the information available when he arrived at the office in the morning.

The actual office, however, was run on democratic lines. Marule remembers that Manuel always showed a friendly concern toward the people he worked with. He made time to spend with any member of the staff and tried to get to know them, their problems, their strengths and weaknesses. There was a community development style to his approach, and he politicized every member in a subtle and casual way. As another staff member recalled, it didn't matter if you were a secretary, office manager or mail boy, you were expected to take part in the policy discussions, and your opinions were weighed alongside everyone else's. In the same way, he gave the staff the broadest possible leeway to carry out their own tasks and continually stressed that they were not working for him, they were working for the people.

Manuel also took advantage of the ideological differences within his staff to elicit the widest possible views on any subject. One of his favourite ploys was to give the same dossier to a leftist like Marule and to a conservative like Deacey and ask them both for their analysis. Then he would sit in the room and listen to their reports and spark an argument between them so he could get a left-wing and right-wing take on the issue.

There were two areas that Manuel was firm on, however. One was money. No one, including himself, was paid more than a modest salary, and everyone was expected to account for every penny of NIB funds they spent. The man who went with his wife and kids to gather returnable bottles on the side of the Trans-Canada outside Chase was not going to turn into a

profligate spender just because the government was sending him cheques. The money, he deeply believed, did not belong to him or his staff or even to the organization; it belonged to the people, and every penny had to be well spent on their behalf. The second issue was in-fighting in Indian organizations. He tried to ensure that alternative views within the movement were treated with respect and that the NIB staff never publicly criticized other Indian organizations. In this case, however, Manuel honoured the proscription only on "public" disputes. If he saw individuals trying to undermine the unity of the movement, as Cardinal was soon to find out, he would not hesitate to quietly send his political allies after them.

During this period, the young NIB staff also spent a considerable amount of time socializing together. They went out after work to have a few beers at the Beacon Arms, or if Manuel wanted to buttonhole some of the guys from DIA or the Privy Council, he'd head down the street to the Berkley Savoy where the bureaucrats hung out.

There were also Saturday night parties at Marule's house in Aylmer. In a sense, these parties were an important part of the work week because she and her husband, Jacob, invited leftists working with the big Ottawa NGOs, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), CUSO and people from socialist Tanzanian and other African embassies to meet with the Indian activists.

It made for a fascinating and mutually educational mix. Manuel was always willing to get up to play a little banjo and sing one of the Shuswap songs Dick Andrew had taught him; his sense of fun and his warm smile were particularly popular among the Africans who felt suffocated by the stuffy Ottawa atmosphere. But while he was enjoying himself, Manuel was also sounding them out on their feelings about Canadian Indigenous peoples and how they related it to their experiences with colonialism in their own countries. As time went on, Manuel began to develop an important circle of contacts among Third World representatives like the First Secretary of the Tanzanian High Commission, Mbuto Milando, which soon led to his touring Tanzania at the invitation of Julius Nyerere and to the development of an international framework around the Indian struggle in Canada.

Another part of the Ottawa job was making contacts with the white power structure in Ottawa. In the past, the First Nations had been completely frozen out, not only by the government but by the press as well.

If an Indian Affairs issue arose in the House of Commons, the journalists would run back and forth between the white politicians and bureaucrats in government and the white opposition Indian Affairs critic and assume that they had found out all there was to find out about the matter. It never occurred to them to ask Native leaders what they thought of the issue.

As one NIB advisor put it, “The press was simply not willing to accept Indian competence,” and Manuel had to work to get them “to give him the time of day.”[12]

To get more visibility, the NIB leader had Deacey finagle invitations for him on Parliament Hill’s social circuit. Deacey recalls that his boss made an immediate impression. When they attended the Ottawa functions, Deacey would find “at the end of the evening that George Manuel had met and talked to everyone. And most of them came to him. He had an ability to attract people without having to—in the white way—be the centre of attention. That quiet wisdom seemed to attract people.”

Marlene was usually too shy to accompany George to these social events, but he persisted and she finally relented, agreeing to go to a dinner at the Chateau Laurier where the prime minister and Ottawa socialites would be in attendance. Marlene remembers her nervousness as she sat at a table with men and women she had never met before but had often seen on the national news.

Her nervousness was dispelled somewhat when some of the women got up to go to the washroom and invited her along. Inside, the Ottawa matrons showed how they made it through these events by pulling mickeys of vodka out of their purses and taking a few belts before heading back to the tedium of the official function. That incident helped her dispel any illusions about the high and mighty since she had used the same strategy, a good stiff drink of whisky, before heading off to the Chateau Laurier.

While Manuel was raising the profile of the NIB in official Ottawa, however, the stresses and strains within the organization were worsening. In early March he was informed that Cardinal was withdrawing Alberta’s delegation from the NCIRT and was threatening to withdraw from the NIB, as well.

The problem for Cardinal was one of jurisdiction. He objected to the fact that the NCIRT seemed to be making policy decisions in its dealing with the claims commissioner and that the NIB was setting up a negotiating committee to deal with the government at a ministerial level. This fear of

the national organization undercutting provincial power was not limited to Cardinal. Other members of the Executive shared his fears and his belief that the NIB should act solely as a coordinating body.

Cardinal might have expected that Manuel, who had been put into power by the western leaders, would immediately address Alberta's concerns. But Manuel was beginning to see a different role for the NIB, and he was able to use Cardinal's threat as an opportunity to exert his authority over his executive.

He invited Andrew Delisle and the executive to a meeting in Calgary where he announced that he felt strongly that "there is no issue which should ever be allowed to threaten the basis of our political strength and our vitality, which can be assured only through unity. . . . This is not the time for bickering and petty politics."[13]

Manuel asked Cardinal to reconsider his decision to withdraw from the NCIRT and offered to sit down with him and discuss any problems he had with either the NCIRT or the Brotherhood. Cardinal refused, and Manuel made a brief tactical withdrawal. But at the next executive council meeting, the NIB leader came prepared with a demand for unity that reflected his recent contact with the African diplomats.

> The African subjugated people cry out for UHURU, for freedom. The Indian people should cry out for both UHURU and UNITY, for it is only through unity that we will achieve real freedom. Freedom not as a subjugated race, but freedom formulated by Indian people for Indian people.

According to Manuel, Indians "had suffered in the past because of lack of unity" and because they didn't have any recourse to an Indian "central government" to bring them together in a unified manner.

> If we had met the white man as Indians of North America rather than as Mohawks, Blackfeet, etc., history and our rightful role in North America would have been quite different. We would have met the white man on his own terms, i.e. "Might is Right," and defeated him at his own game.

He concluded with a call for "national unity" among the delegates and urged them to stick together in the battle against the government and in addressing the other critical issues like Indian education, health and economic development.[14] The speech was a direct challenge to Cardinal, particularly when Manuel mentioned the need for a kind of Indian "central government." Cardinal had fought that idea from the beginning, so after

Manuel finished speaking, he announced that Alberta would "refrain from active participation in the National Indian Brotherhood."[15] When a resolution was put forward to give the NIB the right to disperse funds from the Privy Council to the PTOs, Cardinal voted against it, along with Saskatchewan's David Ahenikew. Less than a year after they put him in office, two of the three prairie leaders were in revolt.

As the NIB president, Manuel was not in a position to declare war on Cardinal or Ahenikew. So, as he often did in these matters, he turned to his friend and ally Phillip Paul. The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs issued a scathing attack on the Alberta leader that accused him of using the NIB only when the feeling moved him and claimed that he "constantly dictated to the executive and the assembly with his amateur theatrics and threats of withdrawal . . . now like a small boy he had stated by his withdrawal that if you won't play my way, then I will take my ball and bat and go home." The British Columbia statement then addressed the other PTO leaders.

> If every time a party is in the disgruntled minority they choose to walk out there is no association. . . . If we are not willing to surrender the authority necessary to allow the Brotherhood to be the national bargaining agent for Indian people, then we might just as well fall back into the provincial splinter groups we once were and compete with each other for funds. The Department of Indian Affairs and the government would like nothing better.[16]

Cardinal was too astute a politician not to know that the stinging attack out of British Columbia came with at least the approval, if not at the instigation, of Manuel. If Cardinal considered Manuel "his man in Ottawa" before the summer of 1971, he now knew that Manuel belonged only to the movement. When push came to shove, no one, not even his family or friends, would deter him from a course of action he believed was necessary for the cause.

At the end of June, Manuel also put Chrétien on notice that he would not compromise on his principles, even if his funding was at stake. The message was delivered when Chrétien invited Manuel and members of the NIB executive to the Montebello resort on the Ottawa River to "consult" with them on the Department's 1972–73 budget.

When Manuel and his delegation arrived, they were met with a fait accompli. Every detail of the budget had already been determined. Worse still, Manuel discovered that it contained provisions for yet another major expansion of DIA's administration staff that the NIB had not been informed

of. The NIB leader immediately rounded up his delegation and walked out. Then he went to the press and denounced the Department in general and Chrétien in particular for wasting money on administration and planning from the top down, when what was important was to give the Indian peoples the right to govern themselves and the resources to do so.

In reality, the opportunity for a little Chrétien-bashing came as a relief. The NIB was still in a fragile state because of the jurisdictional problem, and Manuel was not convinced that it would survive. Somehow, he had to turn the attention of the PTO leaders away from their differences and concentrate their energies on their common struggle.

Paul remembers that during his first year in office, Manuel often spoke about the "discouragements and the fragmentation that was brewing in different parts of the country." He urged the leaders to put aside their internal bickering and "to keep constantly in mind that we have to develop the peoples' strength. We must not forget that the people make us, the people break us."[17]

In a move suggesting that he expected he might be back in British Columbia earlier than planned, Manuel returned to Neskonlith to shore up his political base. He took his half-brother Joe out for a few beers at the Underwood hotel in Chase and urged him to run for Chief in the next band election.

Joe had not been especially interested in politics and he admitted that he was very uncomfortable about taking on the responsibility, but George was persuasive and Joe agreed. To give Joe a head start in the January 1971 band election, George went to Ben Alexander, Andy Paull's old colleague and one of the most respected figures in the community, and asked him to nominate Joe. Alexander made the nomination and Joe won the election, remaining band Chief until 1977 when another Manuel, George's son Bob, was elected.

With his political base covered, George Manuel was thus assured that he could, if needed, go home again. But as he headed into his second year in office in the summer of 1971, his priority remained the unity of Indian nations across the country. He was unexpectedly aided in this task in the fall of 1971 when Cardinal was brought back into the fold. The reason wasn't any change of heart on Cardinal's part, but political necessity, as he found himself under personal and political attack by the wounded grizzly, Chrétien, who in the fall of 1971 had Cardinal treed in his own forest.

* Doug Sanders had become involved in the Indian movement while working with Thomas Berger in British Columbia, and in 1970 he published *Native Rights in Canada*, a detailed legal study of the First Nations' historic rights in Canada.

Chapter 10: The National Indian Philosophy, 1971–1972

> As long as he can continue dividing us, he will continue winning. . . . We, as Indian people, the heart of Canada, must save the white man in spite of himself.
>
> George Manuel, April 17, 1971

During the early 1970s, the White Paper policies remained a kind of Sword of Damocles hanging over the heads of the Indian organizations. After the Red Paper presentation, Jean Chrétien said he wouldn't drop the sword without the Indians' permission, but neither did he remove it and replace it with a new policy.

So, while keeping one eye on Chrétien and the Department, Manuel tried to push the NIB into two new policy areas. The first was Indian control of education and the second was an economic plan for rebuilding the Indian nations.

As Manuel put it, "Economics is the key to solving any human problem. Just as education is absolutely essential to any young person who is going to take his proper place in society. But there are as many different kinds of economic development as there are different kinds of education."[1] Based on his philosophy of community development, Manuel believed true economic development could only come from below, by giving the people the political and financial tools to build their own future according to their own plan. Similarly, Indian education had to be controlled by Indian parents and had to include traditional community values as well as academic subjects.

There was a recent model for this type of education in northern Alberta. In the summer of 1970, Indian parents had protested against a Department of Indian Affairs decision to sell off the Blue Quills Indian School north of Edmonton by occupying the building and demanding that it be given to the community so they could run it themselves. After negotiations with DIA officials, the school was turned over to the community, and Blue Quills became the first Indian-run school in the country.

The education issue came to national prominence in June 1971 when

the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs advocated sweeping changes to the Indian education system. The report called for a partnership between Indians and the government to develop and implement curriculum. It also backed the teaching of Indian languages in the early grades and provided for a major role for Indian parents in running the schools.

Manuel had been following the committee proceedings closely, and he described its report as the most important of the decade. “It is the first time an official source has understood what we have been trying to say for the past hundred years or more.” He stressed the importance of the community being involved in all areas of the education process and highlighted the statement that the government should not transfer any of its educational responsibilities to provincial governments “without the express and clear approval of the majority of the parents in each community concerned.” The NIB president then called on Chrétien to honour the spirit of the report by putting a moratorium on the transfer of Indian schools to the provincial system.[2] Chrétien refused. In September he gave a speech in Thunder Bay where he stated that the transfer of the responsibility for education to the provinces would continue and implied that the Department would not take any responsibility for improving the existing schools while those transfers were taking place.

While Chrétien was disavowing the committee report on education and the NIB was working on its own education policy, the issue was again being fought in a much more direct way in Alberta. The result was a major and, as it turned out, premature confrontation with Chrétien over who would control the education of the Cree and Blackfoot children.

On the Saddle Lake Reserve, Indian parents decided to follow the Blue Quills example by keeping their children out of the local DIA school. Originally they were protesting the poor facilities, but Cardinal and his Indian Association of Alberta (IAA) advisors decided to expand the protest by promoting a province-wide school strike. The immediate demand was to have new schools built on the reserves to replace the run-down facilities, but the ultimate goal was an Indian takeover of the school system.

Cardinal later admitted that the plan was too ambitious and the planners overly confident, but when the school year began in 1971, a significant number of Indian parents kept their children home and numerous schools were shut down. Support for the strike in most communities turned out to be more broad than deep, however, especially in the south where the

Blackfoot were reluctant to follow the Cree initiative.

When Chrétien dug in his heels and refused to negotiate with the parents until the strike was over, most parents outside of the northeast of the province began to quietly send their kids back to the classroom.

Manuel had backed the strike from the beginning. As soon as it started, he and Cardinal set aside their differences over the NIB powers and joined forces to fight the government. On September 28, Manuel travelled to Alberta to attend a number of band meetings in the striking communities, and two weeks later he was back at Cardinal's invitation to attend a meeting of the Alberta Chiefs at the Blue Quills Indian School where they discussed the best way to get Chrétien to come and speak to the people directly. In the meantime, Manuel kept up a steady stream of correspondence with Chrétien, criticizing the deplorable conditions of the Indian schools across the country and urging him to meet with the Alberta protesters.

Chrétien moved a short distance on October *5* when he signed an order for the repair of the dilapidated school buildings in Saddle Lake, but the Indian parents refused to end the boycott until the minister promised new schools. The following day Chrétien went on television to accuse the parents and the IAA of trying to blackmail him and the Canadian government.

During October, the poor organization of the strike began to show as school after school quietly returned to operation. By the end of the month only five schools were still out. Sensing that the strike would soon collapse on its own, Chrétien returned to his hard line. He declared that he would not negotiate with the Alberta parents or with the IAA leadership until every last child was back at the DIA schools.

In desperation, the IAA organized a sit-in by fifty young activists at the Edmonton office of the Indian Affairs Department. The sit-in had little effect, however, because by this time Chrétien was holding secret talks with individual band Chiefs and, as Cardinal put it, "Unfortunately, Indian Affairs found allies within our ranks."[3] Chrétien's breakthrough came in the second week of November when Chief Gordon Young from the Kehewin reserve met the minister in Winnipeg and agreed to end the strike in his community in exchange for the promise of a new school. The following day, the students from two of the last five reserves went back to school and the strike was essentially over.

It had been a test of strength between Chrétien and the Indian

organizations, and Chrétien had won. After the humiliation of the Red Paper presentation, he had proved that with DIA funds and a divide-and-conquer strategy, he could still split off bands from the provincial and national organizations and shape events in Indian country.

For two weeks after the strike, Cardinal lashed out in anger at Chrétien's double-dealing, and the two men quickly found themselves engaged in a bitter verbal battle in the press with both accusing the other of bad faith and attempted blackmail.

Chrétien then proved his ability to go for the jugular when he turned up at an Indian Affairs meeting waving documents that he said showed that Cardinal's IAA had not accounted for $125,000 of its $330,000 community development fund for 1970.

Cardinal hotly denied the suggestion that there had been any wrongdoing, but he had been seriously wounded by the charge, which in the long run proved to be completely baseless. Manuel appeared before the Indian Affairs Committee to offer Cardinal moral support, but the NIB leader already knew that his backing couldn't save the young Cree in the short term.

Cardinal acknowledged this himself in December 1971 when he resigned from the IAA leadership. That resignation lasted only a few months; in June 1972 he ran and was re-elected to the post, but he never regained his former prestige in the national movement.

Cardinal was not the only casualty of the school strike, however. Before the strike, Manuel had been working with various government ministries on setting up the Joint NIB-Cabinet Committee that would give the Indian organization regular access to key cabinet ministers. When Chrétien was under fire, the cabinet members drew their wagons around him and cut off all negotiations with the NIB. All Manuel could do about the failed strike was use it as an example of Indian frustration over the DIA educational system.

In early November, he gave a barn burner of a speech at the Eighth Annual School Committee Conference of Indian Teachers in Sydney, Nova Scotia. The trip started badly when he and Ron Shackleton went to check into the CN Hotel Nova Scotia and were told that no rooms were available. Remembering his experience at the Plaza Hotel in Kamloops a dozen years earlier, Manuel phoned back and tried to make a reservation. The desk clerk told him, yes, the hotel had available rooms, so George contacted the Nova

Scotia Human Rights Commission and filed a discrimination charge.

The confrontation at the CN Hotel and the crushing of the school strike put George Manuel in an aggressive mood. When he addressed the teachers the next day, he began by stating that “speeches aren’t worth a damn unless they are backed by action.” He criticized the fact that the 150 delegates had been selected by the DIA, rather than by Indian organizations. “I’m surprised that you came under the system,” Manuel said, “because you are indirectly saying that the government system is right.”

“We have abandoned our principles and become slaves of a system completely alien to our way of life, our beliefs and our background.” Then he added to the room packed full of Indian teachers and white bureaucrats: “The people of British Columbia say I’m so successful because I dropped out at grade two.” Manuel urged the Indian delegates to “make their school committees more than puppets of the government,” because the government officials who make the decisions “don’t know hunger, or know lack of water, or had to go through a snow drift to get to a school that condemns your culture, your values, your dignity.”[4]

While he was lashing out at the status quo in education, Manuel and his team at the NIB were also working on their own solution in their “Indian Control of Indian Education” brief, which called for a National Indian Educational Authority that would be made up of band educational authorities funded from existing DIA spending on education. The bands would then be given leeway to start their own schools or to negotiate the conditions for their participation in the provincial schools. Whatever means of delivery they decided on, Indian parents were to be put in control over the education of their children, and all of the old 1950s- and 1960s-style integration programs would be abandoned.

“Integration viewed as a one-way process is not integration, and will fail,” the NIB brief stated, because “In the past, it has been the Indian student who was asked to integrate: to give up his identity, to adopt new values and a new way of life. This restricted interpretation of integration must be radically altered if future education programs are to benefit Indian children.”[5] All Indian children would be given an opportunity to study in their own language and to learn about their own peoples’ history and culture.

Manuel knew from his own experience that it was vitally important for

Indian children to have access to the wisdom of their peoples' traditional beliefs if they were to make sense of the world around them. As he saw it: "Indian culture and values have a unique place in the history of mankind. The Indian child who learns about his heritage will be proud of it. The lessons he learns in school, his whole school experience, should reinforce and contribute to the image he has of himself as an Indian."[6]

When the NIB's education brief was handed to Chrétien in November 1972, the minister accepted it in principle but refused to discuss the mechanics of its implementation. It was a tactic that Chrétien would use again and again over the next three years. In many ways, it was more frustrating than a blanket rejection because it allowed him to stall on the issue until another arose and pushed it off the agenda.

This DIA ploy was repeated with the NIB's study of economic development, which was presented to the Department in October 1972. The study had begun in February at a conference in Halifax where a team of outside experts was brought in to examine various government departments and their funding of development projects. Other experts discussed the mechanics of setting up Indian corporations and finding sources of start-up capital.

At a second economic development conference a month later, Manuel stressed the importance of Indian control of economic development and heaped scorn on the department's past record in the area.

"Ever since the White Paper of 1969 declared the old Indian policy the New Indian policy," he told the DIA representative, "a new formula for solving all our problems has swept across the land. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT!" But what kind of economic development was the department interested in? "Is this economic development to solve our problems as Indian people? Or is it economic development to solve Ottawa's Indian problem? Is it medicine or is it witchcraft?"

He then went on to trace the destruction of the Indian economy with the usurpation of the basis of that economy: Indian land. Putting things in the British Columbia perspective, he remarked:

> It is no coincidence that it was the continued presence of the Land question, the heart of any economic development program, that led first to religious persecution, potlatch prohibition, and later to political persecution, when we were forbidden to raise funds for organizing, travel restrictions were imposed, and children were carted off to distant schools.[7]

Real economic development, then, was intrinsically linked to political power. Without political power there could not be the type of development that would help the people at the grassroots level, and without an independent economic base controlled by the people, political power was "an empty farce, a paper tiger." To back this up, George Manuel pointed to the

> nations of Africa, colonized at the same time by the same European powers that came to our shores, who call themselves independent Republics today.
>
> So many of them are still producing raw materials for the industries of the Imperial Powers' home territory. Those countries with honest leadership know that they do not have real independence. They, like us, are having to recover their land base, and work with the people to discover how it can be used to lift up the common standard of the community.[8]

The NIB economic development brief was presented to John Ciaccia, Chrétien's new assistant deputy minister. Ciaccia was at the time considered a very sympathetic figure by many in the Indian movement, but in this case his response to the NIB brief was the same as Chrétien's. He offered a blanket endorsement of the theory behind the proposals but refused to make any concrete commitments.

Aware that he was facing a departmental stonewall, Manuel went on the attack. In a letter to Chrétien, he outlined the various dossiers on his desk and concluded that "we as Indian people are not going in the direction we committed ourselves to—the advancement of our people in the social, educational and political future of our country.

"Mr. Minister," he added, "if you saw such a bleak future for your own people, would you not have broken negotiations or discussions and tried to find another way?"[9] Manuel's frustration at the lack of movement toward eliminating the day-to-day pain of his people came out in his speeches to all Indian audiences. In a springtime speech to the Iroquois and Allied Tribes on the St. Regis Reserve, he spoke about the old and new battles against the white man "who has no heart and abuses all that is placed before him—even his own kind."

"What kind of a man is this White Man?" he asked.

> He has divided some of us and has made some of our brothers feel culturally ashamed that they are Indian . . . [they] even try to imitate the white man so that they can feel important again. We must, I say, not look down on these people but hope that one day they will become Indian again.

The only solution, Manuel would repeat time and time again, was to build a unified activist movement.

> Some of us are still fighting, every day, the white man who is trying to make us as he is: a cold, heartless animal that only cares for himself and no one else. As long as he can continue dividing us, he will continue winning.
>
> We, as Indian people, the heart of Canada, must save the White Man in spite of himself. We must teach him of the Great Spirit, the Mother Earth and how to be human beings again. Let us not die, as the White Man has, by only caring for ourselves.

What Indians needed to develop, Manuel argued, was a "national Indian philosophy" that they could use to offset the white man's philosophy. This philosophy would cover the whole spectrum of self-government issues and set priorities on radicalizing the people at the community level and on setting long-term as well as short-term strategies of struggle.[10]

But Manuel would have little time in the immediate future to pursue that avenue. The NIB, as would so often happen, was caught up in events beyond its control when a Federal Court of Appeal made a decision that had the potential of seriously dividing Indian communities.

In October 1972, the Court unanimously reversed an Ontario court decision on the issue of Indian women losing their Status upon marriage to a non-Indian. The woman contesting the case was Jeannette Corbiere Lavell from the Wikwemikong Band. Her lawyers argued that the provisions under the Indian Act that took away a woman's Status when she married a white man and gave a white woman Status when she married an Indian, contravened the Canadian Bill of Rights.

Justice for Indigenous women was something that Manuel had always fought for—during the consultation hearing in Nanaimo in 1969, he had argued forcefully that all Indian women should be allowed to retain their Status on marriage. But when the NIB lawyer Doug Sanders spelled out the legal ramifications of the case, he discovered that Lavell's case rested on the fact that the Bill of Rights took precedence over the Indian Act. In agreeing with these arguments, the Court brought into question the validity of all the acquired Indian rights. If the Indian Act was overturned before Aboriginal rights were entrenched in the Constitution, the NIB feared that white hunters could use the anti-discriminatory provisions in the Bill of Rights to challenge Indian hunting rights, or real estate developers could challenge the provisions in the Act protecting Indian lands against sale to outsiders.

Along with these major legal considerations, there were also fears at the band level that the thousands of Indian women who had lost their Status would return to their communities with their children and greatly increase the strain on the already scarce housing and community resources and drive the men, women and children there even deeper into poverty.

The women who had unjustly lost their Status insisted that the Federal Court decision be respected. In December, they met in Ottawa to demand that the government change the restrictive laws. The genuine emotion at the gathering was reflected by the leader of the Equal Rights for Indian Women organization, Cecilia Dore. She waved a picture from *The Montreal Star* at the delegates, showing an animal cemetery at her home reserve and explained: "It is a picture of some stones, a dog and a tree. Why am I showing it to you? It carries a message. You realize that dead pets are treated with more respect than the Indian woman who has married a non-Indian! Even when I am dead I cannot go home."[11]

Despite his sympathy for the woman's cause, Manuel's legal team was sent to quietly ask the prime minister's office to have the Attorney General appeal the decision to the Supreme Court and argue against it to protect the Aboriginal rights clauses in the Indian Act. If the Supreme Court upheld the Federal Court's finding, he asked that the government take the further step of inserting a "notwithstanding clause" into the Indian Act that stated that the Act would operate in its "present form "' notwithstanding the Canadian Bill of Rights."[12]

Chrétien later publicly endorsed Manuel's position; interestingly, he and Trudeau used the same sort of "notwithstanding clause" to get their Charter of Rights accepted by the reluctant premiers during the patriation of the Constitution a decade later.

When the Lavell case went to the Supreme Court, all ten Indian provincial organizations as well as the NIB and the DIA argued against Lavell and her non-Indigenous allies. On August 27, 1973, the Supreme Court overturned the Federal Court and declared the Indian Act supreme over the Bill of Rights because "it is not the right of every Canadian to be or to become a 'registered Indian.' " A dozen years later, Sandra Lovelace Nicholas, a Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) woman, took a similar case to the U.N. Human Rights Commission, which censured the Canadian government for discrimination against Indigenous women. The government then moved on

its own to restore Status to those women who had lost it by marriage to a non-Indian.

Although his lawyers had argued on the winning side in the Jeannette Lavell case, the outcome was not a particularly happy one for Manuel and many other Native leaders. It preserved the legal protection of Indian Status in the Indian Act, but it also served as a reminder that the legal decision of who was and who wasn't a citizen of an Indian Nation resided in an Act over which they had no control.

In the wake of the decision, Manuel argued that Indigenous peoples should be able to decide on their own Indianness outside of the Act. In a speech to the British Columbia Association of Non-Status Indians, he reminded them that "the Indian Act was made by a white government and the Indian peoples had no say in it. It did not take into consideration the Indian peoples, only white society."

"All boundaries dividing the Native people of this country were made by the white man . . . reservations, U.S. border, and legalities which divide Indian people were made by white people." He went on to stress the common struggle of all Native People, no matter what the Indian Act said, by referring to the great Métis leader Louis Riel who "was hanged in Regina for the very thing I'm talking about . . . independence."[13]

For Manuel, the fight for independence still involved as many internal battles as external ones, and he was forever walking the tightrope between the competing interests of the member organizations. At one point, the leaders of the PTOs even began to grumble about Marie Marule because they feared that she was wielding too much power within the organization.

In fact, Marule was in charge of running the day-to-day NIB operations when George was on the road, which was a great deal of the time. During these long absences, provincial leaders contacting the NIB office were told to deal with her, and some of them suspected Marule was shielding the boss from them.

In her day-to-day work, Marule did, in fact, come to know Manuel so well that she could anticipate his reactions, and Manuel encouraged her, along with everyone else, to take initiative and solve problems on their own, without having to constantly check back to him for approval. More serious than whispers that Marule was "smothering George" was the fact that he was losing his executive assistant. Ron Shackleton had decided to leave the NIB to go to law school. Shackleton's wife, Christine, remembers

that they were both surprised by Manuel's reaction. Despite his long advocacy of further education, Manuel opposed Shackleton's return to school. He told the young Mohawk that it was a critical time in the development of the movement, and he needed him at the NIB.

Shackleton had been a tireless worker at the NIB in both arranging Manuel's extensive travels and taking care of all the details along the way, but he also had a deeply humanist spirit and was a valued counsel in political matters. Christine Deom remembers that Manuel and Shackleton not only had a kind of father and son bond, they also had similar backgrounds.

Shackleton had been taken away from his natural mother when he was very young, but he had been adopted by a white Ottawa couple. He had only managed to locate his birth mother a year before her death, but by then she was in an advanced stage of alcoholism and wanted nothing to do with him.

When she died, Manuel and Marule attended the funeral and, in the name of the NIB, sent an enormous wreath of flowers with a card that read "From the Indians of Canada." The gesture moved Shackleton to tears. He was sorry to be disappointing Manuel with his decision to go to law school. But he believed it was the best way he could contribute to the struggle, so he refused to back down.

Shackleton's departure came at the end of Manuel's first term as National Chief. During that period, Manuel had led the NIB from an indebted paper organization to a significant presence in Ottawa. For the first time in Canadian history, the First Nations and the Indian question were not abstract legal issues to be dealt with somewhere out in the great beyond: they were camped out at the door of Parliament demanding redress to age-old grievances. By 1972, Manuel had become a familiar figure on the Ottawa scene and his straightforward and uncompromising manner had won a grudging respect for both himself and the Indian cause.

During his first term, he had also managed to keep the twelve very disparate provincial and territorial organizations, representing dozens of First Nations and six hundred Indian bands, inside the Brotherhood.

That in itself was a considerable accomplishment. Through initiatives like the education and economic development briefs, the NIB under Manuel had also begun to take the first steps in defining Indian government.

It wasn't surprising, then, that when Manuel ran for a second term at

the General Assembly in Winnipeg in July 1972, he was unopposed and had the active backing of every provincial and territorial leader in the country.

On a personal level, though, the job was a gruelling one; his life was dominated by work. Marlene remembers that he was on the road almost half the year, and when he was home he would have to spend long hours in his room with a bulging briefcase of reports, strategy papers and government documents. On an intellectual level, he was also deepening his knowledge of the historic place of the First Nations in Canada and trying to apply that knowledge to their place in a rapidly changing country and world.

This left him with little time to spend with Marlene and their child. To escape the loneliness of Ottawa, Marlene made an extended visit back to Neskonlith to visit her family and friends.

George found a refuge of his own. During Marlene's visit back home, he slipped away for a weekend of camping in a park in the Gatineaus. While he was there, he met a couple of men from the adjacent Maniwaki Reserve who invited him to camp on reserve land. During the rest of his time in Ottawa, Manuel would occasionally disappear to the Maniwaki Reserve for a few days to fish, sit by a campfire and forget the responsibilities of leading the First Nations movement.

A less traditional escape was the occasional drinking sprees with his friends and, just as in his work, his stamina was considerable; at times, however, these blowouts got him into trouble. Once at a reception in a Victoria Hotel with a group from the Union, someone mentioned the Slavic custom of breaking the glasses after a toast. George was feeling pretty good by this time and decided to follow the ritual by breaking his glass against the mantle. Everyone joined in with a rain of glass and the police were called. George took the rap for the mess and was led out of the hotel while his supporters hurled insults at the police.

The NIB president tried to calm everyone down by telling them, "Let them arrest me," but when they had him out of the hotel the police let Manuel go and the matter was dropped. Manuel was always careful, however, to make sure these occasional binges did not interfere with his work. Some of his fellow leaders, who went on to confront serious battles of their own with the bottle, remember that no matter how much partying he did, he was always back in shape in time to take on his responsibilities.

As it turned out, he would need all his wits about him in the ensuing years. In his second term of office he continued to push the education and

economic development dossiers, but he also turned his attention to the one issue that had always dominated his political life: the land issue.

By this time, Manuel had reached the conclusion that it had been a mistake to accept the idea of researching Indian land claims because they were already owners of the country. Henceforth, he would insist that the onus was on the white pretenders to prove their right to the lands they claimed.

When Manuel discussed the new approach at a Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs meeting, Don Moses asked him how they could force the land issue to the top of the agenda. Manuel replied that they might have to march on Ottawa to demand their Aboriginal and land rights. When asked how many people the Union should send, Manuel smiled and suggested that the answer was the same as to the question of "how many Indians are in British Columbia? Every Indian should go! I put it to you as leader of the National Indian Brotherhood, if it's necessary to walk to Ottawa to gain some recognition, then we should do it and I will be right there with you."[14]

Part III: Indian Shogun

> We began to call him *Shogun* because he was way ahead of the Canadian political leadership . . . a generation ahead.
>
> Dave Monture on George Manuel

Chapter 11: International Travels

> If the motivation of the CIDA people is to remain high it would be of some help . . . to arrange some tangible indication in the press that the Canadian halo has not slipped too far.
>
> Telex from Dar es Salaam to External Affairs, following George Manuel's 1971 visit to Tanzania

While George Manuel was working out the details of his national Indian philosophy, he was also beginning to shape an international one.

Manuel was aware of the importance of seeking international recognition of the Canadian Indian struggle as early as 1960, when he and Henry Castilliou Jr. worked on a brief for the United Nations on the British Columbia land question. By the time it was submitted to the U.N., he had left the North American Indian Brotherhood (NAIB), but the idea of internationalizing the struggle was a tactic he always favoured.

In the spring of 1971, the NIB president began a series of travels that would culminate in the founding of a new international Indigenous organization under the aegis of the NIB. The first trip was to New Zealand and Australia as part of a Department of Indian Affairs delegation.

Planning for it had begun after the Red Paper presentation. At the time, Prime Minister Trudeau had referred to New Zealand as a model for Canada's relationship with its Indigenous peoples. After the meeting, Trudeau called Len Marchand into his office and asked him if he would lead a group of MPs to take a closer look at the Māori's place in New Zealand society.

When Jean Chrétien heard about Marchand's project, he wanted in and eventually took over the leadership of the delegation with Marchand's role reduced to that of an advisor. One piece of Marchand's advice that Chrétien took, however, was to invite Manuel to accompany them on the tour.

When the invitation arrived at the NIB office, there was a great deal of discussion about whether it would be appropriate for the NIB president to travel with the minister, but it was decided that the opportunity for Manuel to meet with Māori and Aborigine representatives would outweigh any problems caused by his appearing in a few photographs with Chrétien.

When the delegation, which also included Bill Mussell, Len Marchand and three other MPs, left for the South Pacific on March 26, 1971, Manuel was concerned that he "might be compelled to spend a lot of time listening to government officials from one country telling officials from another country about their Native people." He also worried that the only Māoris he would be allowed to meet would be those "who share the same sentiments on integration'' as the white politicians in Canada and the host countries.[1]

To counter this, he was determined to do what he could to break away from the official tour and to try to use his first trip outside North America to meet with Indigenous peoples who had faced the same wave of European expansion and settlement as the North American Indians.

The historic link between the British Columbia Indians and the Indigenous peoples of Eurasia was, in fact, particularly strong. The first European to make contact in both regions was Captain James Cook. Both areas had then been subject to British settlement and developed under the British imperial system.

As Manuel had feared, however, holding discussions with the Māoris and Aborigines in an informal setting would not be easy. As soon as the plane touched down at the Ohakea Air Base, a New Zealand air force jet whisked them off to the capital for a series of official meetings.

The first was with Chrétien's counterpart, the minister of Māori and Island Affairs, who "described with great enthusiasm his government's policy for the Māori people." Manuel reported: "We were told by the minister that the Māoris are integrating quite rapidly; more Māoris are moving into the city than ever." As the New Zealander went on to list his department's achievements in education, Manuel observed that the country's approach "seems to be complete assimilation and the dissolution of all special rights and status of the Māori people. In fact, the longer I listened to the learned gentleman, the more I thought I was listening to Mr. Chrétien describing the White Paper to a visiting Māori anthropologist."[2] This sense was reinforced when Manuel was leaving the minister's office and met three Māori men outside. He was surprised to discover that they held three of the four seats set aside for the Māori people in parliament, and yet they had not been invited to the minister's briefing.

From the three Māori MPs, Manuel also learned that Dr. Pat Hohepa of the Māori Council, the New Zealand equivalent of the NIB, had asked to be included in the meeting, but the government had not issued him an

invitation. Before the attending Canadian diplomats could drag him off to the Canadian High Commission to be entertained by Māori dancers, Manuel invited the three MPs to his hotel room that night so they could hold their own discussions away from the prying ears of government officials.

At the High Commission, Māori dancers were delighted to discover the North American Indians among the Canadian delegation, and during the ceremony they invited Manuel to join with them and demonstrate one of his peoples' traditional dances. Manuel accepted the invitation and performed a traditional Shuswap dance and sang one of his grandfather's songs. Later, however, when he read the High Commissioner's report to Ottawa on the incident, he felt that he had made a mistake.

The High Commissioner had written that "the President of the National Indian Brotherhood donned his buckskin robes and feathered headdress and to everyone's delight performed several Indian dances and chants and gave gifts to many of the locals."[3] When Manuel saw the patronizing words, he regretted having put on a show for the white officials. "They are still trying to keep us in our place," he told a friend, "dancing and singing. It was the type of report I would be ashamed to show anybody."[4]

After the ceremony, Manuel got down to his specialty: politics. He had also invited the Māori entertainers to his hotel for the evening meeting with the Māori MPs and, as it turned out, he found himself hosting an impromptu Māori convention in his room. Along with the Māori politicians and the entertainers, Dr. Hohepa and members of the Māori Council showed up to meet the North American Indian leader. The discussions were wide-ranging, and both Manuel and his guests discovered they shared a common point of view on the land and Aboriginal rights questions, as well as on the related issues of education and the preservation of their ancient cultures.

Manuel was especially interested in finding out more about the New Zealand electoral system, which set aside four seats for the Māori MPs, a model that he had mentioned in his 1960 Parliamentary brief. The Māoris told him they were generally pleased with the system, but admitted it was only part of the solution. It gave them a voice in parliament, but more often than not, their voice was drowned out by that of the dominant society.

At the end of the evening, Dr. Hohepa agreed to take Manuel around to Māori villages when the official tour was over, and the Canadian delegation flew off to Australia to meet the government officials in Sydney. But first, Manuel had a meeting with Prime Minister Keith Holyoake where he

planned to underscore the fact that he was representing the First Nations of Canada and not the government. Chrétien was already in Holyoake's office when George Manuel limped in wearing his Chief's headdress and carrying a painting he was offering as a gift. The prime minister took one look at him, turned to Chrétien and asked, "Is he tame?" It was an awkward moment, but Manuel put the prime minister at ease by explaining that he had brought a painting as "a gift given to him by the Indian people of Canada in a spirit of good will which in their tradition meant freedom, justice and the brotherhood of mankind."

The New Zealand prime minister recovered sufficiently to accept the gift, but his remark had stung Manuel, who later told Marie Marule how insulted he'd felt for himself and his people. Holyoake tried to make up for his gaffe a few days later when he sent Manuel a carved Māori totem, but the slight was not forgotten.[5]

The trip greatly improved for Manuel when he was able to visit the Māori villages with Dr. Hohepa. During the visits, he often donned his ceremonial headdress, and at every stop on this informal tour he was warmly met. Children crowded around him—the sight of a North American Indian in buckskins and headdress reminded them of American movies and, to Manuel's great amusement, they shouted "Cowboy! Cowboy!"[6]

Manuel's tour of New Zealand ended with a Māori-organized ethnic bash that included Polynesian peoples such as Samoans, Tahitians and Fijians who had moved to New Zealand and who shared a common culture with the Māoris, as well as a Yugoslavian dance troupe that had somehow wandered into the party.

He found this encounter with the peoples of the South Pacific invigorating and was interested to learn that they, too, shared a love of the land and a fierce pride in their traditional cultures. By the time Manuel left the island to meet with the rest of the delegation in northern Australia, he was leaving friends.

Manuel caught up with the rest of the Canadians in Gove, Australia. As was the case in the first days of the New Zealand visit, he was given little time away from government officials. When he had the opportunity to speak with two white teachers in an Aborigine village about the problems in education, he was "left with the impression that on an individual basis there is some sentiment for helping the Aborigines but overall there is not much indication that they are receiving the kind of assistance that springs from real

sympathy." To an even greater extent than the New Zealanders, the Australians were pursuing an assimilation program. One official told Manuel that the whole education system, from pre-school to adult classes, were aimed in that direction, and "he explained that they regard integration as giving too much recognition to the collective Aborigine community.

George Manuel in his Chief's headress delights the Māori children in a New Zealand village, 1971.

"Assimilation," he told us, "concentrates on the individual personal adjustment to the Australian community as a whole. He may retain much of the elements of his own culture but he [wants] to be able to move in Australian society much the same as a Turkish migrant."[7]

When it came time for Manuel to address an Aborigine student assembly, he showed his disapproval of the paternalistic Australian attitude by telling the kids to "be proud that you are dark. We have every reason to be as proud as the white man. And maybe more. . . . Just as much as the Māoris and the Aborigines, the Indian people in Canada are dark people in a

White Commonwealth."[8]

The NIB leader elaborated on that theme in his report back to his executive. "We share with the Māori and Aborigine, and I suspect also with the many different African peoples," he wrote, "not only this common struggle but also the very real progress that we have made in the past decade. Progress measured . . . by the success of our struggle for survival."[9]

By the time Manuel left Australia, he was thinking not about the fight for survival but about the battle to regain the political and literal ground that had been lost over the past centuries. And he began to see that struggle more and more with an international perspective. On the long plane ride back, he counted up the people in the Indigenous world.

With the Indians of Canada, the United States, Central and South America and the Indigenous peoples of Eurasia, the movement would represent not hundreds of thousands of people but tens of millions. Working together, they could force the issue of Indigenous rights onto the world stage in a way never dreamed of before.

On his arrival back in Ottawa, he began to plan an international conference that would lay the groundwork for "some more lasting institution. One that, by making us look outward to our brothers across the seas, will also help us to see inward to the course of progress within our own communities."[10] A few months later, he was describing his vision of an international organization of Indigenous peoples to the First Secretary of the Tanzanian High Commission, Mbuto Milando. He told Milando that if they could somehow stand together, the voices of millions of Indigenous peoples could reach beyond their national borders and be heard by the world.

Milando thought for a moment, and then suggested that what Manuel seemed to be talking about was the emergence of a "Fourth World." Manuel seized on the phrase and over the years popularized it to describe all of the Indigenous peoples trapped within settler societies in conditions that were close to those of the peoples of the Third World.

In an interview a couple of months later, Manuel outlined the direction of the new movement.

> Aboriginal people of the world must unite to prevent the white race from destroying mankind. White people have a need to destroy, conquer, to suppress; this is not found in the Aboriginal value system. There is an urgent need for Aboriginal peoples all around the world to unite to give direction to the white race before it destroys itself and all mankind.[11]

The New Zealand trip also demonstrated the potential of the NIB for winning international respect for the Native cause. As the representative of virtually all of the Indians of Canada, even the prime minister of New Zealand's door had been opened to Manuel, and he was in a small way able to demonstrate that "Indians still exist as a people and that we are still fighting for our rights and that we will not be whitewashed or silenced by the government that so willingly stole our land."[12]

The photo of Manuel presenting the Indian painting to the foreign prime minister and the account of the trip to New Zealand and Australia was heavily publicized in NIB publications (although Holyoake's slight was edited out of the official version). To bring the importance of the meeting between North American and Eurasian Indigenous peoples to the reserve level, Manuel enlisted a CUSO friend of Marie Marule, Michael Posluns, to put together a slide show with a voice-over script.

When Posluns finished that task, he began working with Manuel on *The Fourth World,* a book that combined autobiographical sketches and a political analysis of the forces of assimilation that Manuel's people had faced in the past.

Like a good politician, Manuel was able to use the book (Posluns interviewed Manuel for forty hours on tape and then wrote the manuscript), the slide show of his New Zealand/Australia trip and the subsequent foreign trips to win prestige points back home. As he expanded the role of the NIB onto the international stage, he was able to expand his influence in Canada far beyond that of the provincial leaders who had put him in power.

At the end of 1971, just after the collapse of the Alberta school strike, Manuel was given another opportunity to mount the international stage when he received an invitation from the Tanzanian embassy to attend its tenth anniversary of independence in December 1971.

As Marule recalled, it had been a last-minute invitation. Originally, only Chrétien had been invited. When she heard about this, she suggested to a friend at the Tanzanian embassy that they invite Manuel as well. The Tanzanians agreed. But just before Manuel and Chrétien were to depart, Chrétien had to back out because of pressing parliamentary business. So Manuel and his executive assistant, Ron Shackleton, left for Tanzania as the only Canadian guests at the independence celebration.

The two-man NIB delegation attracted a great deal of attention in an African country where most people had assumed that the North American

Indians had long ago been wiped out by the U.S. cavalry, as they had seen so often in Hollywood movies. “George Manuel was,” as an NIB press release put it, “happy to dispel that impression.”[13]

Manuel and Shackleton arrived in Tanzania just as the independence celebrations were getting under way and were invited as official guests to the military parade and various parliamentary ceremonies. Through the NIB’s contacts with the Tanzanian diplomatic community in Ottawa, a private meeting was arranged with Julius Nyerere for later in the trip.

Before that meeting took place, however, the NIB president found himself in a scrap with the Canadian High Commission. Canadian diplomats had only found out about his presence in Tanzania when they read an article entitled “Canadian Indians Seek Ties With Us” in Dar es Salaam’s daily paper. Manuel was pictured on the front page in ceremonial dress and quoted as having come “to seek solidarity with other members of the Third Humanity.” In the article, he was quoted as describing the Europeans in North America as colonialists and said that the objectives of the Indian movement were akin to those of socialist Tanzania. He told the reporter that he was impressed to see that Tanzanians were able to run their own affairs and that he “almost shed tears” when he saw Africans at the head of every activity in the country.

In an offhand remark that caused a great deal of concern for the listeners at the Canadian High Commission, Manuel responded to the question about whether North American Indians would resort to arms in their struggle by stating that he was “extremely impressed by your military parades.”[14]

To find out if Manuel was hinting that the Canadian Indian movement was considering engaging in an armed struggle, a representative of the High Commission was sent to a meeting Manuel had arranged with a group of Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) workers in Tanzania. Despite many attempts, the High Commission operative was unable to pin Manuel down on the armed struggle issue. In a report sent to Ottawa, he accused Manuel of taking “the Delphic approach to the question as to whether the Indians are prepared to resort to arms in the fight for their rights; he does not answer it, but like the lady in the poem he doesn’t say yes and he doesn’t say no.”[15]

The discussion with the CIDA people that evening grew heated when some of the Canadian CIDA workers took offence at Manuel’s description of white Canadians as “colonizers” and accused him of idealizing Tanzania and

its socialist policies. The aid workers also criticized him for hinting that Canadian Indians might take up arms and for damaging his country's reputation in Tanzania. The discussion ended with George Manuel and Ron Shackleton shouting that Canada belonged to the Indians and the whites had no business to it anyway. As the High Commission operative saw it, "Chief Manuel appears to have adopted many tactics of Black Power, which until now has been an alien technique in the relations between the Indians and the authorities of the Canadian government."[16] The scrap between George Manuel and the CIDA workers was picked up in the Tanzanian press, which began to publish articles critical of Canada's treatment of Indians. For the High Commission, the most damaging article condemned CIDA programs as imperialist and urged the Tanzanian leadership to drop Western aid altogether, following Cuba's example of turning to the Soviet bloc for support.

George Manuel with Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere, December 1971.

When that article was published, a CIDA official wrote to the High Commission, demanding that it take action to refute George Manuel's statements. As the CIDA official put it:

> As a Canadian citizen I would like to express hope that the Canadian High Commissioner will do something to correct the false and immensely harmful impression caused here by Chief Manuel of the so-called CIB [sic]. . . . In my own case, I have time and again been called upon to assure my working partners that Canada has no colonialist attitudes. . . . Today my words appear farcical.[17]

The High Commission telexed back to Ottawa for background information on Manuel, the NIB and the situation of Canadian Indians and asked that someone "outside official channels" write an "impartial factual"

response to Manuel that could be planted in the local newspapers. To be effective, the government telex explained, the person selected to author the piece would have to be someone who was known for his or her "sympathetic approach to Nyerere" and yet would be willing to portray Canada's Indian policies in a favourable light.[18]

The damage control had come a little late. The High Commission was already receiving detailed questions from the Tanzanian press about the difference in the mortality rate of white Canadians and the Indians of Canada and the relative education, income and employment levels of the two groups. When the NIB leader left the country, diplomats at the High Commission were left muttering that they could only hope that Canada's "halo" had not slipped too far as a result of Manuel's visit.[19]

For Manuel, the battles with the CIDA workers and the High Commission had been marginal. The highlight of his visit was his meeting with Julius Nyerere. As he saw it, Nyerere's philosophy of self-reliance, frugality and leadership-by-example closely paralleled what he was trying to accomplish with his own "national Indian philosophy," and he was struck by the Tanzanian leader's sincerity and dignity.

As part of his leadership-by-example method, Nyerere often went out into the villages to work with the people. It was in one of these villages that Manuel was introduced to him, and for Manuel, the man Nyerere most resembled was his grandfather, Dick Andrew.

"We only have to watch Julius Nyerere," he wrote, "the president of Tanzania, taking time from his executive duties to work alongside the day labourers in a small village to know that the traditions of our grandfathers have a place in the modern, technological world."[20]

In the same vein, Manuel was also impressed by Tanzania's bottom-up philosophy of rural development, in which he saw parallels for the development of the reserve lands in Canada. As he put it, "the background of Indian life was socialism. How they lived; how they shared with one another,"[21] and he thought it was important that they retain some of those values in the modern world. In fact, Manuel's attraction to African socialism was not a passing fad. In his own journals, he described himself as an "Indian socialist" and saw some form of socialism as the only viable future for his people.

One area of discussion with Nyerere that would have long-range

consequences for Manuel concerned the role of tribalism. In Africa, the re-emergence of tribal blocks after independence had at times led to civil strife and political paralysis; Nyerere warned Manuel about the effects of tribalism in the Fourth World movement. Manuel took the warning seriously, and he later stood in opposition to a tribal movement in British Columbia, even though Nyerere's advice was in some ways a poor fit for the Canadian movement.

George Manuel continued his African education with a side trip to Kenya. He had read about the heroism of Jomo Kenyata as a man who had taken up arms and suffered imprisonment to free his people during the independence struggle.

When Manuel looked at the results of the struggle, however, he found Kenyata using "the same bureaucratic system against his own people as the white race . . . that he accused of exploiting them. . . . He just took over the system and placed black-skinned people there." Kenyata, he observed, was being wheeled around in a white Cadillac with a showy police escort and living with "all the trimmings of a very wealthy European. But when you go into the country, you see how poor his people are. Just as poor as they were when the English controlled that country. So there hasn't been any change."[22]

Overall, the African trip also gave Manuel the opportunity to consider the complexity of the struggle of the Canadian Indians for self-government. In Africa, he witnessed firsthand how even a minority of whites had managed to dominate the overwhelming majority of Black people through economic control. How much more difficult it would be to win justice in Canada, where the whites had the weight of numbers as well as economic might to frustrate the numerically small First Nations.

While acknowledging the difficulties, Manuel was determined to carry on building the Fourth World movement. On his return to Ottawa, he and Marie Marule held a brainstorming session in which they addressed the enormous logistical problems involved in arranging the international Indigenous conference.

While the planning was still in its formative stage, the NIB leader made a third international trip that only added to the complexity of the Fourth World. In 1972, he visited the Sámi reindeer herders in the northern reaches of Scandinavia, and he discovered a Fourth World people whose skin was white.

The occasion of that trip was the U.N. Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. The NIB hadn't been on the original invitation list when Canada's National Preparatory Committee met in November 1971, but once again Marule was able to use her NGO contacts, in this case head of the Canadian Labour Congress James MacDonald, to get an invitation for the National Indian Brotherhood president.

When the invitation arrived in February 1972, Manuel accepted it "enthusiastically" because the growing environmental crisis represents "a threat to the very existence of the culture and way of life of thousands of Native Canadians."[23] But he also saw in the invitation an opportunity to put forward the Canadian Indian cause among Europeans and the larger U.N. community that would be attending the conference.

In the lead-up to the Stockholm trip, Marule worked to get Manuel meetings with groups like the Copenhagen-based International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) and Survival International, which largely comprised white anthropologists, but which had good records in promoting Indigenous rights.

Through IWGIA, the NIB was also able to locate a lawyer who had contacts with the Sámi, and Jamie Deacey, who was working as Manuel's executive assistant, was sent off to finalize the details of Manuel's meetings with IWGIA and to try to get him an invitation to visit some Sámi communities in the north.

In his travels, Deacey ran into Gun Leander, a reporter from *Dagens Nhyeter,* Sweden's largest newspaper. She was intrigued by the idea of the Canadian Indian leader visiting the Sámi and offered to fly Manuel up to meet with them at the paper's expense while she produced a photo essay on the historic meeting of Indigenous peoples from two continents.

Manuel arrived in Stockholm on June 3 with a hastily assembled NIB position paper on the environment that was highly critical of the Canadian government's record. Perhaps because of this, he found himself "excluded from the mainstream of the Canadian delegation." So he went off on his own to cultivate contacts with the Chinese, Brazilian, German, Australian and East African delegations.

From his own soundings, he discovered that most of the delegates placed Canada at "a half-way point between the developed and undeveloped countries." It was a role that the Canadian delegation—a self-described "honest broker" in world affairs—also seemed to welcome.[24]

Manuel took the time to visit some of the leftist "alternative conferences" that had been organized to coincide with the U.N. conference. He wanted to see if they were ideologically in line with the NIB but found them "to be lacking in basic organization and shaky in their presentations."[25]

As in the South Pacific, Manuel's real priority was meeting with Indigenous peoples, and when he left for the north with the Swedish reporter on June 8, he was full of anticipation. He found the 1,200 kilometre flight fascinating and described the terrain as "similar to the Northwest Territories. It [was] barren but beautiful country."[26] The delegation stayed in Kiruna overnight, and in the morning they flew by helicopter to the village of Rensjon where he was welcomed by the Chief who was wearing his ceremonial costume. The Swedish photographer snapped pictures of the historic meeting of Manuel shaking hands with the Sámi Chief on the helipad.

Manuel was also impressed by his first look at the Chief's house, which even in that remote area had electricity and was, by Canadian Indian standards, quite comfortable. But when he began to discuss the problems with the Chief and other Sámi representatives, he discovered that the issues the two peoples were fighting were, as in the case of the Māori and Aborigines, remarkably similar: "Their major problem—as is ours—is the question of land rights and who actually owns and has the right of usage of the land." The Chief explained to Manuel that the Sámi "had herded their reindeer through the area that is now the town of Kiruna during the change from summer to winter pastures and vice-versa." When the town was built, the Sámi were forced to take one of two alternative routes. But then a mine development blocked one of those routes and the mining company and the government proposed building a road that would effectively shut off the last route to their traditional winter pasturing land.[27] This threat of loss of their livelihood was made even more serious by the Swedish practice of recognizing people as bona fide Sámis only as long as they were reindeer herders. If the people could no longer herd reindeer, they would cease to exist as a distinct people in the eyes of the Swedish government.

For Manuel, this bureaucratic threat sounded painfully familiar. He told the Chief "that we have undergone quite a bit of the same type of government exploitation and deliberate attempts at eroding and destroying both our land and treaty rights." One similarity between the Sámi and the

Canadian Indians that was not at all painful to discover was the feast the local people put on after all the “heavy political talk.” The meal, which “consisted of smoked reindeer, bread very much like bannock, and wild berries,” was, Manuel said, the best he had had in Europe. He was struck by the fact that he had been served almost the identical meal in Indian homes in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. His vision of the Fourth World of Indigenous peoples that had grown during his trip to the South Pacific became even more concrete as he ate the country food of the Sámi people ten thousand miles away in northern Sweden.

During the feast, he tried out his idea of an international Indigenous peoples’ conference on the Chief. In Manuel’s words, the Chief “did not disappoint me and told me that the idea had long been a concern of his as well, and that he would be very pleased to participate in such a conference.”[28]

In itself, the agreement of the Sámi Chief to attend a conference of the world’s Indigenous peoples would have made the northern trip a success, but there was another benefit. Manuel and the delegation returned to Stockholm on Saturday night and woke up Sunday morning to see on the front page of the paper a photo of Manuel meeting the Sámi Chief. There was a half-page story about how the great Chief of the Canadian Indians had explained that his people had similar problems as the Sámi and, in many instances, were even more badly treated by the government. When you flipped to page six, there were related stories based on interviews with Manuel that had as their theme, as Deacey remembered it, that Canadian Indians “were treated like shit” by the federal government.[29]

George Manuel was staggered by the amount of coverage his visit had received, and the Canadian NGO delegations shared in his delight. The head of the official delegation, Maurice Strong, however, was not at all happy by the beating Canada took in the Sunday paper. Part of his job had been to promote Canada in Europe, and the front-page treatment of the Indian issue cast a cloud over Canada’s image.

The atmosphere was tense when the Canadian delegation met on Monday morning for what was supposed to be a routine get-together. To break the ice, James MacDonald stood up and said he “thought it was marvellous that some member of the Canadian delegation was receiving some publicity.”[30] The government representatives didn’t laugh at the joke, and Manuel never heard anything in the way of an official reaction, but he

noticed that afterward the officials and the ministers were much more concerned about him and went out of their way to include him in all the activities of the delegation.

The last week in Sweden also gave Manuel an opportunity to examine the byzantine workings of the international community. He came to understand that North American Indians "are in direct competition with the developing countries for funds and other resources that our Indian organizations have been demanding from the Federal Government." As he put it, "There is only so much water in the well. In terms of prestige, the developed countries would much sooner help out a country 2,000 miles away than a disadvantaged minority in their own country." That realization was a bit disheartening. He concluded "that if the National Indian Brotherhood and Indians in Canada are to accomplish their goals, they must achieve international recognition and aid. But we should not suffer under any illusions, instead, we should look at our position with reality and make the necessary moves to assure our international participation."[31]

The conference wrapped up on June 15, but Manuel's journey was far from over. Although tired from his two-week sojourn and filled with new concerns about the course of the international struggle, he headed off to other European capitals to try to gather the recognition he felt the movement needed. His first stop was Copenhagen, where he met with representatives of the International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs and held a press conference with the Danish press. In his private discussions with IWGIA, Manuel discovered that they were planning a forum in Chicago to discuss how their progressive anthropology differed from the paternalistic approach of the classic anthropologists.

Manuel told them point blank that what he wanted was "an international Indigenous peoples' conference with Indigenous people being the participants as opposed to being studied." He was pleased to find that the European anthropologists didn't argue against the idea but instead reacted with enthusiasm. They spent the next two days discussing the conference, with IWGIA agreeing to cancel their forum and use the money to help fund Manuel's project.[32]

From Copenhagen, Manuel flew to London to meet with the Society of Friends, the Anti-Slavery Society and, finally, Survival International, which was made up of a group of wealthy Englishmen who were involved in supporting the Indians of Brazil. He was trying to enlist all of the British

groups into supporting the conference and was rewarded with polite encouragement.

Deacey recalls, however, that some of the people they met in Britain tended to be “a bit eccentric. If you didn’t collect odd butterflies from the Amazon, you could have a Canadian Indian or some other Native representative around.” This was particularly true of the Anti-Slavery Society, which was headed by a relative of Aldous Huxley who thought the Indigenous peoples’ conference was a grand idea but felt he would be more competent in organizing it than the Indigenous peoples would.

Before leaving London, Manuel had an opportunity to meet a number of British MPS and ex-cabinet ministers and discuss the conference; he was surprised to find they supported the idea and offered to try to get British government financial backing for it.

A British Lord, Sir Geoffrey de Freitas, then led Manuel on a tour of Westminster. As they passed through Westminster Hall, Manuel “thought of all the decisions that had been made here so carelessly for centuries that had affected our people. It was not a sense of nostalgia which overcame me, but one of weariness in that we have not really progressed but merely traded one white government in London for another in Ottawa.”[33]

His spirits were lifted that afternoon when he was honoured at a luncheon by the Society of Friends and discovered that the last person to be so honoured was the American civil rights leader, Martin Luther King Jr.

The final stage in George Manuel’s journey was Geneva, where he met with representatives of the International Labour Organization who told him quite clearly that they “were not interested in embarrassing the Canadian government.” Manuel was surprised at the cool response and made a mental note that in the future he would try to get James MacDonald and the CLC to meet with the ILO leadership and explain the situation to them.

His final meeting in Geneva was with Newaz Dawood, of the World Council of Churches, who greeted him warmly and pledged full support for the idea of the Indigenous peoples’ conference. Dawood went further, discussing with him the methods that an Indigenous peoples’ organization could use to get non-governmental observer status at the U.N. In fact, they sent a representative for a follow-up meeting with Manuel soon after he arrived back in Ottawa.

The end of his European tour marked George Manuel’s second anniversary as NIB president. While he was entering his third year, his

attention once again swung back to the domestic scene, where a landmark court case put the land claims and Aboriginal rights issues centre stage in Canada as they had never been before.

Chapter 12: Land Title and the James Bay Battle, 1972–1973

> There is no Trail of Tears that can be drawn on Canadian maps as it must be drawn for the Cherokee Nation. We were not banished from our land. It is as though the land was moved from under us.
>
> George Manuel, *The Fourth World*, 32

In the fall of 1972, the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) was still far from achieving the "national philosophy" that George Manuel had spoken of at the annual assembly. But the organization had achieved enough internal cohesion to begin to focus its efforts on what would always be one of the fundamental issues: the rights of the First Nations to their traditional lands.

In a November speech to the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, Manuel signalled that he was not only ready to move on the question of Aboriginal land rights, but also to try to reopen the whole Treaty question.

He began by speaking of the great Plains Cree Chief Big Bear.

> A hundred years ago Big Bear was resisting the signing of the treaties. He continuously cautioned his colleagues against consenting to the conditions of the treaties by the commissioners. He, like Poundmaker, believed that this is Indian land, it isn't a piece of pemmican to be cut off and given in little pieces back to us. He was totally opposed to the entire spirit of the Canadian treaty terms.

As Manuel saw it,

> The frustrations, humiliations and anger of that time are also present today. Attempts to subjugate our people continue in spite of centuries of our resistance. Some of our people are tired of passive resistance. All we want is justice and freedom from tyranny and subjugation. Big Bear wanted the same things for his people a hundred years ago as we want for our people today—Justice, Freedom, Social, Cultural and Economic Independence.[1]

Harold Cardinal had come to the same conclusion after speaking with the Elders in Alberta. The Elders, he discovered, never viewed the treaties as a surrender of land or sovereignty. Instead, they considered them as peace treaties between nations. According to Cardinal,

> we did not, by treaty, surrender our water, our timber, our mineral resources; we did not surrender our way of life.
>
> The only thing that we agreed to do was to live in peace with the white man, and to share with

> him the available land so that he could come into this country, and bring his livestock, and support his families.

Cardinal went on to argue that if "our Elders understood the treaties to be peace treaties rather than bills of sale for land and resources, how legitimate is the government's claim to ownership of those resources?"[2]

The government's claim to legitimacy over the unceded lands in British Columbia was put before the Supreme Court in the fall of 1972 and the answer, which was given in January 1973, caught both the government and the Native organizations by surprise.

The case was the Nishga land claim, which was filed under Frank Calder's name with Tom Berger serving as the Nishga lawyer. Berger based the claim on unextinguished Aboriginal title, a concept that had been rejected by Trudeau and all preceding Canadian governments. In the past, the Canadian courts had also always agreed with the government, and there had been fears among Indian leaders that the Nishga case would be just another legal door slammed in their faces.

But that didn't happen. The seven-member court ruled three for recognizing the Nishga's Aboriginal right to the Nass Valley, and three against. The seventh judge did not rule on the contents of the case, but only on procedural grounds. That meant the Supreme Court had split on the idea that the non-Treaty parts of Canada, which included Labrador, the Northwest Territories, the Yukon and almost all of Quebec and British Columbia, were still under the legal title of the First Nations who resided there.

The ruling had the greatest implications for the British Columbia and northern lands because the court rejected one of the key arguments the federal and British Columbia governments had used to deny the existence of Aboriginal title in these areas. Successive governments had argued that the British Columbia and northern Indians were not covered by the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which explicitly recognized the existence of Indian "nations," because no British subject had reached that far when the Proclamation was issued.

In his review of the case for the NIB, Doug Sanders pointed to Justice Emmett Hall's decision that the Proclamation was "confirmatory and declaratory of the common-law position on Indian title." According to Hall, the "Proclamation was like the Magna Carta in being a fundamental document of English law. It followed the flag and came to apply in British Columbia by virtue of the Colonial Validity Act."[3]

Before the decision was handed down, Frank Calder, James Gosnel and a group of Nishga leaders had gathered in Len Marchand's office on Parliament Hill. When the outcome was announced, Marchand called Manuel at the NIB headquarters on Albert Street and invited him to come over. Then he arranged for the whole group to meet with Prime Minister Trudeau in the prime minister's office.

For Manuel and the others it was a precious moment. The NIB had presented its position paper on Aboriginal rights to a commons committee in 1971. They had asked the government to recognize that prior to the colonial settlement of North America, the Indian peoples "had uncontested dominion over their tribal territories and all the people therein." As the brief put it, the First Nations "could govern, make laws, wage war, and had their own political, social, educational, economic and property systems. Each tribe had absolute control over the resources and products of its lands."[4] Manuel had followed up with a lengthy personal letter to the prime minister in June 1972, asking Trudeau to expand the terms of reference of the land claims commission to include Aboriginal rights.

The prime minister didn't bother to answer. Now he found himself confronted in his office by Manuel, Marchand and the Nishga leaders clutching a court decision that gave strong legal backing to their claim of Aboriginal title over vast areas of the country.

Trudeau's response was a smile and the enigmatic statement that, "Perhaps you have more rights than I thought."[5] After a polite discussion, the group left the meeting without a clear commitment, but they were encouraged by the fact that the prime minister seemed to be taking the Aboriginal rights question seriously.

To keep the pressure on Trudeau, Manuel immediately issued a press release that stated that he wanted "the prime minister to resolve this question without further delay," and asked him to keep in mind "that Canada is supposed to be a Just Society."[6]

George Manuel with NIB lawyer Doug Sanders in Ottawa, 1973.

The Calder judgement and the pressure from Indian organizations seemed to have some effect on Ottawa. When the Yukon Indian Brotherhood

presented its land claims brief to the government in February 1973, Jean Chrétien announced that the government was, for the first time, prepared to enter into discussion “with a group that has never signed treaties.” Marchand remembers that he and the others kept up the pressure throughout the summer of 1973 for a more explicit recognition of Aboriginal rights. He was told during a July lunch with Trudeau and Chrétien that the government was prepared to recognize the concept of Aboriginal rights, but it would only negotiate the exact content of these rights with the different Indian groups involved.

When the new position was announced, there was a sense of elation in Indian country. It was felt that a major breakthrough had been made and that the Indian nations in the non-Treaty areas were only years away from just and comprehensive land settlements. It was in this spirit of optimism that Phillip Paul called up Doug Sanders and asked him to move back to Vancouver Island to help set up a land claims research centre and put together a claim that would encompass virtually all of mainland British Columbia.

Manuel expressed regret that Sanders was leaving for Victoria because, in their years together at the NIB, the two men had developed a close working relationship. But Sanders also had the impression that Manuel thought that he, too, would soon be heading back to help negotiate the British Columbia land claim and the subsequent self-government protocols.

That sense of optimism was slowly eroded, however, as it became clear that what Trudeau and Chrétien considered Aboriginal rights were a far cry from what the First Nations were dedicated to recuperating. For Manuel, the goal was recognition of the Indian Nations as equal partners in the country with the French and English nations, and that the Indian peoples should have at least the same powers over their land, resources, health systems and education as the non-Indian people of Ontario or Prince Edward Island, or as the French majority in Quebec.

But in the federal government’s view, Aboriginal rights were considered something that had to be “extinguished” during land claim negotiations, and the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) strategists began to develop plans for modern-day versions of the nineteenth-century treaties, with the government of Canada offering cash settlements and reserve lands in exchange for agreements from the Indian nations that they had no further claim on their traditional homelands.

This narrow, and from Manuel's point of view, genocidal approach to Aboriginal rights was first pursued in Quebec, where the Cree and Inuit were facing a determined push from the provincial government that wanted to expropriate their lands for the James Bay hydroelectric project.

The government of Quebec had quietly begun studies for the project in 1965 on lands the federal government turned over to the province in 1912 under the condition that the Aboriginal claims be settled. Quebec had never fulfilled its obligations, and after details of the James Bay project leaked in 1969, leaders from the Indians of Quebec Association (IQA) began to protest the province's failure to address the land claim. As a result, a committee of the federal and provincial governments and the IQA was set up to look at the question of Aboriginal land hunting and fishing rights in the region.

Before any progress had been made, Premier Robert Bourassa announced the "world would begin tomorrow" with his "Project of the Century," a $6 billion James Bay Hydroelectric Project that would instantly create 125,000 jobs and eventually serve as "the key to the economic and social progress of Quebec."[7]

The northern Cree leaders reacted with shock to the announcement of the massive development of their lands by outside forces. After a meeting of the local Cree leadership in Mistassini, they drafted a resolution for the minister of Indian Affairs stating that the Cree opposed the project "because we believe that only the beavers had the right to build dams in our territory" and requested that Chrétien "use his legal jurisdiction to stop any attempt of intrusion of our rightful owned territory by the government of the province or any other authority."[8]

In Quebec City, Bourassa ignored the Cree concerns and passed the James Bay Development Corporation Act that put a large portion of Cree and Inuit lands under the board of a five-man government.

Manuel was shocked by the speed and the callousness with which the government of Quebec was moving against the Cree and Inuit. In the past, he had been sympathetic toward the demands of Quebec vis-à-vis English Canada, and he expected that the Quebecois would be sympathetic to the demands of the Native peoples for formal recognition of their nationhood since they were asking for essentially the same thing from English Canada. The events surrounding the James Bay Project, however, suggested otherwise.

"The experience of living in a land of minorities," he told a Montreal

audience,

> has taught the people of Quebec to find their own greatest strength and to expect the same from others. But recently I have had to wonder whether this experience has developed a capacity to consider the needs of others.
>
> The decision of the Government of Quebec to proceed with the James Bay Hydro Development Project is a decision to displace or take away the livelihood of seven thousand Indian people. Without even the kind of consultation exercise with which the federal government indulges us.

George Manuel went on to warn that if Quebec persisted with the project, the result would be "conflict and disharmony between north and south inside Quebec."[9] As the debate over James Bay heated up, Manuel's tone became harsher. He accused Quebec of having tried to starve Native peoples into submission in the 1930s and suggested that little had changed since then.

The James Bay battle was to be a seminal one for the Indian movement. It would show its strengths and weaknesses, and it would set the ideological tenor of the land battles in the future. It would also lead Manuel to draw a line in the sand over the issue of the extinguishment of Aboriginal rights.

In his fight against the James Bay project, the only real ally Manuel had inside the government was Len Marchand who announced in the House of Commons that he was tempted to "take out his tomahawk" on the James Bay issue. He claimed that if his Indian ancestors had had a different immigration policy there would be no question about human and environmental disasters like the James Bay project.

Marchand then produced the preliminary environmental study, which broadly indicted the effects of the project on the rivers and wildlife of northern Quebec and stressed that the most devastating effect would be on the Native peoples in the region. The development, he claimed, would not only disrupt traditional Cree hunting areas and pollute Cree waterways, it would cut roads and airfields into the region that would bring to the isolated Cree communities all the pressures of modern life without giving them time to prepare for them. Indian leaders and anthropologists feared the result would be the social disintegration of what was one of the last few traditional hunting societies in North America.

It was around this time that Billy Diamond, the young Cree leader, and Charlie Watt, the equally young Inuit leader, showed up in Ottawa looking for support from the NIB. Manuel arranged a meeting for them with Chrétien, himself and the IQA lawyer, James O'Reilly.

When Diamond and Watt asked Chrétien for funds to help them launch a legal challenge to Quebec's assault on Cree and Inuit lands, Chrétien is reported to have stated flatly that "There is no way the government of Canada is going to support you in a law case against the government of Quebec. James Bay is a reality."[10] But three months later, Chrétien bowed to pressure from Indian leaders and from advice in his own department suggesting that the federal government had a trustee role toward the Quebec Cree. He agreed to give the IQA funds to take the James Bay Corporation to court.

In the spring of 1973, Quebec Justice Albert Malouf agreed to hear the case for an injunction against the project and announced he would take the testimony of the hunters and trappers of the region before making a decision. When Malouf wrapped up the public testimony in late June, there was some hope that the Native cause would be supported by the courts.

But that sense of optimism was offset by a sudden rift in the Quebec Indian coalition when the twenty-four-year-old Diamond informed Andrew Delisle, the head of the IQA, that he would handle the land negotiations on his own. Diamond eventually brought in O'Reilly to work on the Cree claim, and then he withdrew his people from the IQA entirely.

Manuel was concerned about Diamond's sudden withdrawal from the Quebec wing of the NIB, but he and others had known that trouble was brewing between the Crees and the Indians in the southern part of the province. For Delisle, a Kahnawake Mohawk, the James Bay battle was a means not only of solving the Cree claims, but also of forcing Quebec to address Indian land claims across the province.

As Dave Monture, who was then working for the IQA in Quebec City, remembered it: "Andrew [Delisle] wanted George's support for a larger land claim in Quebec, and the Crees wanted to draw a line and negotiate on their own behalf. They didn't want southern, and in their view, more assimilated, Indians who didn't even know how to trap any more, messing around in their claims."

The young Crees had also scorned the southern Indians for their three-piece suits and for always being surrounded by white lawyers, but as Monture recalled, "it wasn't eighteen months later that Billy Diamond was wearing business suits and surrounded by lawyers." During the Malouf hearings, Diamond, Watt and O'Reilly met several times with the provincial government to try to put together a deal, but according to Diamond's

biographer, Roy MacGregor, the two sides were “light years apart. . . . The bureaucrats were talking about a cash sweetener and the setting up of reserves just like the ones where the poverty-stricken Crees on the Ontario side of the bay had lived since 1905.”[11]

What the government did succeed in doing, however, was to get Diamond and O’Reilly focusing on a cash offer in leading them toward extinguishing Cree title. In a private meeting in May with John Ciaccia, who had moved from Chrétien’s office to the provincial Liberal Party, Diamond and O’Reilly offered Ciaccia a wish list of changes to the project that included greatly expanded land and fishing rights and a billion-dollar cash settlement.[12] This behind-the-scenes offer was a clear departure from the position Diamond had taken in public. In his speeches, Diamond insisted, and continued to insist for some months, that Cree land was not for sale and only beavers had the right to build dams in their territory. After his secret billion-dollar offer to Ciaccia, however, he had put a price on his peoples’ land, and all that was left from the government point of view was the haggling.

On the surface, the Cree and Inuit cause appeared to be strengthened on November 15, 1973 when Justice Malouf presented his 170-page decision. It granted the Cree and Inuit an injunction against the construction of the James Bay Hydro-Electric Project and recognized that “the rights of the Cree Indian and Inuit populations have never been extinguished.”[13]

The head of the James Bay Corporation treated the whole matter with contempt and announced that “The injunction will not slow the rate at which our work is progressing. . . . There are five thousand of them and five million of us. They can’t keep it all for themselves.[14] The Corporation then went to the Quebec Court of Appeals and had the injunction suspended. The bulldozers were once again sent rolling across the Cree and Inuit lands as the five million began to push the five thousand from their lands.

With the project moving ahead and Billy Diamond’s secret billion-dollar price tag on the table, the government of Quebec went to the Cree and Inuit with a counteroffer. Ciaccia’s opening figure was $100 million in cash and two thousand square miles of land.

The Indigenous leaders refused the deal and Bourassa waited two months, until January 1974, before going public with the $100 million offer. Quebec government and Hydro Quebec officials then began to portray the

northern Indians and Inuit as extortionists trying to squeeze more millions out of the government.

When Manuel heard of the $100 million offer for extinguishment and saw how Bourassa presented it, he knew the Crees and Inuit were in trouble. His suspicions were heightened when Chrétien came out and publicly supported the Quebec offer.

In a January 1974 statement, Manuel launched a vigorous attack on what he saw as Chrétien's sudden acquiescence to Quebec. He accused the DIA minister of "grossly misleading the general public, deceiving the federal Parliament and attempting to manipulate the Indian people by his recent statement in support of the Quebec Government's termination policy for the Indians and Inuit people of the James Bay area." The NIB leader then attacked the ambiguity of the offer in the area of government jurisdiction over the Indian lands.

> The social and economic development services to be provided by the Government as stated is extremely ambiguous. If 'the Government' referred to in this proposal is the Provincial Government of Quebec then this is an enormous transfer of federal responsibility to provincial authority, a complete implementation of the 1969 federal Liberal government White Paper proposal which has been vigorously opposed by all Canadian Indian groups.

Manuel then took aim at Chrétien's duplicity. For Chrétien "to repeatedly inform the House of Commons that he is upholding his responsibility to the Indian and Inuit people of James Bay area by partially financing the James Bay Court battle," and then turn around and pressure "the Indian and Inuit people to accept an unrealistic termination proposal illustrates a complete inconsistency and an apparent dangerous deception."[15]

By the spring of 1974, however, George Manuel and everyone else knew that the Cree were cornered. Quebec would not back down on any of the essentials of their James Bay development plans and the federal government would no longer help the Cree pursue the matter in the courts. All Diamond and Watt could do was stall and try to get Quebec to sweeten its offer. But even here, they could not hold out forever. Public opinion in Quebec had been whipped up against the multi-million dollar demands of the Cree and Inuit, and it was becoming politically easier every day for the provincial government to withdraw its offer and simply shrug off the whole issue of the Indians and Inuit in the north.

In November 1974, when Quebec came with what it said was its final

offer, the Cree and Inuit and their lawyers decided that they had the best deal possible under the circumstances and signed an agreement in principle to extinguish their Aboriginal title to much of their homeland.

In return, Diamond and Watt won for their people a cash settlement of $150 million, a small land base, a larger area of land use, and a role in regional government. In exchange, they renounced "all claims to collective title" to their traditional lands in Northern Quebec.[16] Hydro Quebec would join the beavers in having carte blanche in damming what had been, since time immemorial, the rivers of the Cree and Inuit. Indian land, which, as late as February 1974, Diamond had described as "not for sale, not even for millions and millions of dollars," had been sold.[17] Manuel reacted to the news of the final settlement more in sadness than in anger.

"Extinguishment of Aboriginal rights means to me the extinguishing of Indian identity, totally and completely," he told an *Indian News* reporter, "and that is why I am against it and that is why the people I represent are against it." When he analyzed what, exactly, the Cree had received for giving up their heritage, he was even more disturbed. The $150 million turned out to be "the equivalent of a payment of $805 per year, or less than $3 a day, per Native person for the first ten years of the agreement.

"And half of the $150 million mess of potage is dependent on the generating capacity of the James Bay power plant—the plant responsible for stealing our birthright." Still, Manuel refused to attack Diamond or any of the other Cree leaders personally. Instead he took a parting shot at Diamond's legal advisor when he concluded that "The only person to benefit from the James Bay settlement is the lawyer for the Crees."[18]

As it turned out, Manuel was right. Sixteen years after the deal was signed, even a Hydro Quebec-sponsored study indicated that the Cree in Northern Quebec were just as poor as they had been before the agreement became Canadian and Quebec law in 1975. The costs of social and environmental destruction caused by imposition of "The Project of the Century" on the Cree land remain incalculable, and the agreement has opened the way for Hydro Quebec to pursue countless other projects, large and small, on the lands the Cree and Inuit leaders signed away.

For Manuel, the success of the federal and provincial governments in pushing forward with the James Bay project was a bitter blow, especially when it had come after the apparent victory in having Aboriginal title recognized in principle by the federal government. After all, what did

Aboriginal title mean if a provincial government could move onto Indian lands and develop them as they saw fit? Of what significance were negotiations when one side could unilaterally determine the outcome? Looking ahead, George Manuel was also concerned that the Quebec settlement would be used by the federal government as a precedent for the negotiations it was carrying out with the Yukon Indians and in future negotiations with the Indians of the Northwest Territories and British Columbia.

Those negotiations, he feared, would also be geared toward the extinguishment of Aboriginal title, and he told his friends that he would rather die without an agreement with the government and pass on to his children "the legitimacy of the struggle" than sign a deal like James Bay "that they could not live with."[19] As he saw it, the failure to stop the James Bay development pointed out the continued weakness of the movement. To try to re-invigorate it, he organized a retreat for himself and the provincial and territorial leaders.

The meeting was designed to provide an opportunity for the Indian leaders to build a common front against any deal with the government that involved the extinguishment of Indians' Aboriginal title to their traditional lands.

As Manuel saw it, "the co-operation to reach this goal could only become a reality if every provincial and territorial leader co-operated with each other in complete honesty, in opening their minds, hearts and feeling in respect to a national strategy for the goals and objectives of economic independence for our people."[20]

During his closed-door meetings with his fellow leaders, however, Manuel was disturbed to find that many of them were wavering on the issue. He believed that they had a very narrow political perspective. To turn the tide, he launched an information campaign that saw NIB staffers and Jacob Marule, with his ANC experience, travelling across the country to speak of the anti-colonialist struggle and the philosophy of liberation behind it.

While he was working at politicizing the grassroots in Canada, Manuel was also continuing to build the international Indigenous movement. He began by bringing in two new figures to help prepare for an international conference.

The first was Guy Lavallee, a Métis priest from St. Laurent, Manitoba, whose enlistment to the cause occurred in what had become a typical

Manuel recruitment technique. Lavallee had been appointed to head the permanent Indian Pavilion after Expo ’67, and he invited Manuel to speak at the “Indians of Canada Day” he organized in 1971. He had just arrived back in Montreal from a stay in Manitoba in January 1973 when his phone rang at 2 p.m. on a Friday afternoon. It was Manuel calling from Ottawa and he said, “Guy, I want to see you.” Lavallee said fine, he’d head up to Ottawa on Monday or Tuesday to meet with him. Manuel said, “No, I want to see you this afternoon.”

Lavallee was a bit taken aback by what amounted to a summons to the NIB office but thought “what the hell” and jumped in his car for the two-hour drive to the capital. When he entered Manuel’s office, Manuel shoved a bulging file across the desk and asked Lavallee if he would read it on the spot and tell him what he thought of it.

The dossier contained all the planning work that had gone into the international Aboriginal peoples’ conference. When he finished going through it a couple of hours later, Lavallee told Manuel he agreed with both the contents and the objectives of such an organization, and Manuel said, “Good, you’re hired.” Lavallee asked, “What for?” Manuel smiled. “Hired to raise money for this project. We need hundreds of thousands of dollars in six weeks and we want you to raise the money. . . . The only problem is that we don’t have any money to pay you. So you have to raise your own salary first.” Lavallee remembers standing there

> listening to this man, sitting behind this huge desk with the conviction of a Jean Drapeau in front of a thousand people. But at the same time, he’s gentle and firm. It was at that very moment that I came to know George Manuel as a person. As a man of conviction, as a man of vision. Not just George Manuel the politician or the tough negotiator around a table with politicians. But really a man of deep conviction, a man who was very sensitive to humanity and who had a vision for Indigenous people.
>
> And I got on the bandwagon because I agreed with his objectives, but I also felt that he could lead us on to greater heights. . . . Which he did afterwards. History proves that.[21]

Lavallee soon found himself dispatched to Europe where he began to tap the contacts Manuel had made in 1972 to get the funding for the Indigenous conference.

At the same time, Manuel was busy recruiting another international operative through one of Marie Marule’s contacts. His name was Rodrigo Contreras, a young Ecuadorian who had landed in Canada in 1969 and begun working with NGOs in Ottawa. He had seen Manuel for the first time

at the consultation meeting in Ottawa in May 1969, and he remembers that two things struck him about Manuel: the fact that in the late 1960s he had a very short brush cut, and that he came across as “a very lucid alternative kind of leader.” Over the years, that latter impression was confirmed when Contreras met Manuel informally at Marule’s parties in Aylmer, where Contreras also lived. He first heard of the plans for the Indigenous peoples’ conference from Marule in 1973, and he was immediately taken by the idea. When Marule told him they were looking for someone to help organize the Latin American side of things, he expressed an interest so he arranged for a meeting between the two men.

Contreras claims the meeting changed his life. Like Lavallee, he was struck by the depth of Manuel’s conviction and the breadth of his vision. Contreras also observed that

> it was a turning point in my life that I met a man of such stature and nature that made me feel equal, almost for the first time in my life. . . . I think [Manuel] felt equal and unequal many times in his life, but I think he tasted equality and he fought for it until he died. . . . And now I strive and I struggle and I fight for equality because I know what it feels like to have a feeling of complete equality.[22]

Finally, Manuel hired a new special assistant, Clive Linklater, a young Saultaux from Ontario whom he had trained as a community development officer in Edmonton. Manuel had first used Linklater as a liaison worker with the James Bay Cree, but he soon also put him to work as an organizer of the Aboriginal peoples’ conference with Marule, Lavallee and Contreras.

By October, enough contacts had been made internationally for Marule to make the first trip south to Georgetown, Guyana, where they hoped to hold the first preparatory meeting. Marule met with high officials in the Forbes Burnham government who agreed to host the meeting the following April. When she left Georgetown, she made stops in Colombia and Ecuador to meet with the local Indigenous leadership and issue invitations to the April conference. Back in Ottawa, she drew up the final invitation list and sent it out to Indigenous representatives from four continents. Manuel’s dream of an international organization of Indigenous peoples was one step closer to becoming a reality. But at the same time, the battle on the home front was heating up, as young militants began to push the issue of Native rights in Canada onto the streets.

Chapter 13: Red Power

> The younger generation of our people are organizing silently, and things will be different when they take over. It is unfortunate that Indians may have to use militant action to achieve their rights. Even now the mood of Indians is explosive.
>
> George Manuel, April 1971

In May 1973, Marlene and George had a second child, a son named George Jr. Like George Manuel's other children, George Jr. would barely see his father during his childhood. But by 1974, George Manuel's work was bringing him into close contact with two of his grown sons, Bob and Arthur, who were both drawn into the increasingly radical youth wing of the Indian movement.

Arthur Manuel had been elected president of the Native Youth Association (NYA) in 1971, and he preached the unity of all the Indigenous peoples of North, South and Central America so they could "form a majority over whites in the Western Hemisphere." He also called on the Indians of Canada to have as many children as possible so that in a generation or two the armed struggle would become a viable option. A fiery speaker, the young Manuel ended his speeches with a Black Panther style clenched fist and a shout of "Power to the People!"[1]

In the past, George Manuel had often used the radicalism of the younger generation to urge the government to negotiate. He once told a *Calgary Herald* reporter that his son said he was "too mellow, that I don't know what politics are all about, and that I will never win anything this way." He then pointed out that the situation among the young was reaching the "explosive" stage and that if the government didn't act, violence was a real possibility.[2]

The youthful explosion that came in 1973 turned out to be a controlled blast, however, with the NYA organizing a twenty-four-hour takeover of the Indian Affairs building in Ottawa to demand that the federal government stop the James Bay project and begin serious negotiations on the British Columbia land question.

George Manuel got wind of the plan and asked his half-brother Joe, who was still the Neskonlith band Chief, to come east to keep an eye on the

young people in the NYA.

Arthur Manuel had arranged for 150 members of the Native Youth Association to meet at the Akwesasne Reserve on Cornwall Island on the afternoon of August 29. As a courtesy, he called his father at three in the morning to let him know about their plans. Manuel only asked his son, “Do you know what you are doing?” Arthur said, “I think so.” The elder Manuel replied, “Fine,” and then quietly arranged to have the NIB lawyers outside the Indian Affairs building in the morning in case trouble broke out.

The group travelled from Cornwall to Ottawa early on the morning of August 30, arriving at the Indian Affairs building at 8:30 a.m. The takeover went off without a hitch. The young militants marched into the building with blankets and sleeping bags while they chanted and drummed. The few employees who were already at their desks were ushered out while the RCMP and the Ottawa City Police surrounded the building.

After Arthur Manuel assured the police that they were carrying out a peaceful sit-in that would end in twenty-four hours, the tension was relieved and the police sat back to wait it out.

During the morning, the police even allowed George Manuel to pass through their lines to the door of the building, and he spoke briefly with Arthur, asking him if they needed anything. Arthur said everything was fine and went back upstairs where filing cabinets were being emptied and the photocopy machines were kept busy. The young activists were especially interested in documents concerning James Bay, and along with the photocopies, they stuffed a number of sensitive original documents into their bags and blankets.

Shortly after the incident, packages of photocopied and original government documents began appearing in the mailboxes of Indian Chiefs across the country. Some of the more wary Chiefs, seeing the government seals and the “secret” and “confidential” designations, were reported to have quietly taken them out and buried them in the bush. For the NIB and its affiliate organizations, however, the documents supplied a wealth of information on government strategies, in particular those dealing with Indian opposition to the James Bay project.

The government didn’t find out about the missing documents until much later when the RCMP began an investigation. So when Arthur Manuel and the NYA members walked out of the Indian Affairs building the next morning, they were surrounded not by police but by reporters and television

cameras, and they stopped to make statements before walking away with the government documents hidden inside their sleeping bags and blankets.

With their mission accomplished, Arthur Manuel led his NYA contingent across the river to Quebec where they stopped at a *dépanneur* to buy a few cases of beer before heading to his father's house to celebrate the takeover and the document haul.

Arthur still considered his father something of an establishment figure, so he wasn't sure of the reception he would get when they arrived. But his father welcomed them into his house and sat with them as they celebrated their act of defiance.

It was typical of George Manuel that he never hesitated to back any form of Indian resistance. As the Canadian diplomats in Tanzania had discovered, he would not even renounce the right of Indians to engage in armed struggle in their fight for justice. Many times he would say he was "not suggesting physical violence" but add parenthetically that in the fight for Indian sovereignty, violence "can never be discounted."

While George was quietly backing Arthur's radical approach, he was also working with his oldest son, Bob, within official circles in British Columbia and then in Ottawa. During 1971 and 1972, Bob Manuel was working as a self-described "foot soldier" for the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. He was married by this time and, as had been the case with his father, his travels in the movement were taking a toll on his marriage. When George Manuel met him in Saskatoon in 1972, Bob was attending a course to prepare him to teach at Camosun College.

George knew Bob was having problems at home, and he told him about the difficulties of his own separation from Marceline. "It was a very tough thing," he said. "You start to get back together with your wife, you separate and get back together, you know it just causes a lot of misery for everybody." He advised Bob not to go back to British Columbia and suggested he come to Ottawa to work with him. Bob at first was reluctant; he explained that Phillip Paul had already offered him the teaching job, but George offered to pay his way, or at least the balance of his ticket, and his son agreed.

When Bob Manuel arrived at his father's house a few weeks later, though, he discovered that his father had had second thoughts. George Manuel realized that hiring his son to work for him at the NIB would leave him open to charges of nepotism, so, instead, he arranged for Bob to get a

job with the DIA, similar to the community development job he had had with the department in the mid-1960s.

Bob recalled that his father had used more than a little pull to arrange it. George came home from the office one day and told him that John Ciaccia had a meeting with Marie Marule the next day and that Bob should meet him there. The next morning, he waited outside Marule's door until she made an excuse to leave the office and indicated that Bob should slip in to talk to Ciaccia.

Ciaccia was apparently expecting him because he had just one question: "Are you ready to travel?" Bob said he was, and Ciaccia replied, "I'm not sure, but if we can get all the paperwork done this afternoon, you'll be on a plane to Alberta tomorrow."

As it turned out, Bob Manuel flew to northern Alberta the following day where he coordinated funds for a number of small economic development projects. It was while he was in Alberta working for the DIA that he was tipped off about Arthur's plan to take over the Department's headquarters in Ottawa. He caught a discreet bout of diplomatic flu and went home for a few days until the furor died down.

During his trips back to Ottawa, Bob also had the opportunity for serious political discussions with his father. He discovered that, despite his father's apparent political and organizational success in building the NIB, he was greatly frustrated by the organization's inability to push forward on the self-government front.

From his experience watching how Quebec and the James Bay Development Corporation were moving against the James Bay Cree, George had shifted his thinking away from the "national philosophy" and toward the idea of building a "peoples' movement." He was beginning to believe that only if the mass of people were politicized and energized and put in the forefront of the movement could they take on the powerful government and private-sector interests that were blocking the political, social and cultural rebirth of Canada's First Nations. Like Arthur, Bob saw the change in his father's approach to Indian politics and gained a new respect for his willingness to lay his own position on the line to further the cause.

George Manuel with Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau after an NIB-Cabinet Committee Meeting, 1974.

He recalled that what his father "really wanted to see was the emergence of the people. He never fought against the American Indian Movement (AIM) or anybody. He always welcomed them. He had a kind of philosophy that the Red Power movements are the ones that make change, that make uprisings.

It was the radicals at the base, George Manuel knew, that allowed him to go to the politicians and tell them, "you're not listening to us, to the policies that we are trying to put forward. . . . That's why these things occur." Marches, demonstrations, civil disobedience and even the threat of violence, Manuel came to believe, were essential in getting the government's attention.[3] He believed the movement would not be built only by Indian lawyers and university graduates, but by school dropouts and even by those who had spent time in jail. To bring them into the struggle, he proposed setting up a Cultural Education Training Centre that would politicize school

dropouts and former Indian inmates. He wanted fighters as well as intellectuals.

During the summer of 1974, those fighters were coming into evidence. Indian road blockades began to appear across British Columbia to protest the lack of movement on the land issue. More serious was the occupation of the Anicinabe park near Kenora in northern Ontario.

The park was taken over by a group of a hundred young armed Indians who called themselves the Ojibway Warrior Society and modelled themselves on the AIM activists who had been involved in a ten-week stand-off and a bloody gun battle with the FBI at Wounded Knee in 1973.

The Ojibway Warriors claimed that the park land had been illegally expropriated by the federal government from Indian lands and then sold to the city without the Indians' consent. The Warriors were besieged by a contingent of the RCMP for more than two months before they finally surrendered to the authorities.

A few weeks later one of the leaders of the Warriors Society, Louis Cameron, turned up in Montreal where he met a group of radical urban Indians, both Status and non-Status, and hatched a plan to storm the Parliament buildings in Ottawa during the opening of the new session on September 30. To gain Native support and national publicity, they organized a cross-country caravan that left Vancouver in rented buses on September 14.

While attracting a certain amount of press attention, the caravan found little support from the Indian communities or Indian leadership. One problem was that their demands were unfocused and often poorly thought out. They asked that Indians receive "payments in perpetuity from all levels of government" and for $500 million to be made available "for legal defence." The oddest demand, however, was that the NIB leader, Chief George Manuel, be made minister of Indian Affairs.[4] The group was being funded in part by the pariah of the Canadian left, the pro-Albanian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist). Because of what were seen as unsavoury elements in the caravan and the naivete of its leadership, most Indian leaders avoided contact with the group.

The aloofness of the mainstream Indian organizations changed after September 30 when two hundred caravanners assembled on Parliament Hill and were badly beaten by the police. Manuel was one of the first to step in and condemn the police action.

The NIB leader was also able to use the park occupation, the caravan

and the fistfights on Parliament Hill to a political advantage. With the spectre of Indian political violence hanging over their heads, government ministers were suddenly receptive to Manuel when he walked into their offices and told them it was time to deal with him or face the *déluge* of the young radicals on the streets.

The result was a relaunch of the Joint NIB-Cabinet Committee where he could once again escape the suffocating bureaucracy of the Indian Affairs department and face the various government ministers on a more equal basis. At the first meeting on October 9, 1974, he reminded the cabinet that the First Nations were in a very critical time in their history. "We are surrounded by immigrants from other lands. Our lands are no longer ours in some places. Despite this, we are determined to maintain our special place, our special rights and our special status as Indian people."

He went on to list the statistics on the debilitating poverty that was still a fact of life for the overwhelming number of the First Nations peoples. He called on the government to attack the problems at the source: the lack of funds and the lack of local control over those funds. He pointed out the waste of the DIA money on a new $43-million office tower in Ottawa and the $80 million that was spent on "special services" that had nothing to do with helping the development of the Indian people.[5]

In a sense, Manuel was going back to the beginning to instruct the cabinet on the simple facts of life for his people. The reason was not only the long hiatus between meetings, but because he was now, for the first time as the NIB president, facing a new minister of Indian Affairs.

In the fall of 1974, Judd Buchanan, a former Alberta insurance man, took over from Chrétien, who went to the Treasury Board. There was a great deal of apprehension in Indian country about facing the devil they didn't know because Buchanan's only contact with Native peoples had been a brief stint as Chrétien's parliamentary secretary in 1970.

As it turned out, the Indians' fears about Buchanan would be justified in the long term. In 1974, however, the minister was still getting his bearings; his department was following the Chrétien strategy of fencing with the NIB over each issue as it arose but not initiating any new policies.

The main battles during this period were over economic development and housing, two issues that George Manuel saw as intimately related. The NIB's economic development position was set out in a report that was published in *Indian News* in the fall of 1973; the report was heavily

influenced by George Manuel's exposure to African socialism and by his international perspective. It began: "In economic terms the present situation of the Canadian Indian Reserve communities is comparable to that of underdeveloped countries. If the Indian community of Canada was placed on UNESCO graphs it would compare, in respect to several economic indicators, to Botswana."

Manuel's strategy for relaunching the Native economy began with a proposal for a massive housing blitz on reserves across the country. "House building," he believed, was "the one industry capable of providing employment at all levels of skill development. It lays the foundation through training for skills which can be carried over into the widest variety of economic endeavours."[6]

For Manuel, house construction on the reserves was not only a means of improving shelter but of driving the local economy and providing jobs and marketable skills to the people. In this way, the housing program was part of his stated philosophy that "both political and economic independence must progress simultaneously." To achieve this, he advocated the community development approach of using "the end as a means of achieving the end." That is, when developing a program or a plan of action for cultural, political, social or economic advancement, you always tried to maximize the advantages in all the other areas as well.

As soon as the DIA discovered that the NIB was working on a housing plan, the bureaucrats went to work trying to set up their own Housing Task Force. But when the department's task force coordinator turned up at the Brotherhood's housing symposium in March 1973 in Winnipeg, he was immediately challenged by the delegates and ejected from the hall.

Manuel wrote to the minister asking that he dissolve the DIA's task force, "transfer the budget of the Task Force to the National Indian Brotherhood Working Committee on Housing" and restrict the DIA's role to that of advisor. The minister said he would work closely with the Indian organizations on the housing issue "whenever possible," but insisted that the department had to take a leading role in developing the housing policy; he suggested the DIA and the NIB set up a coordinating body.

Manuel rejected the offer. Before the NIB became mixed up with the government, he insisted, it must have its own study complete so they could bring the Indian view to the table. He wrote back to the minister that "Indian people have repeatedly been asked to endorse other people's assessments of

our needs, with little time allowed for us to reflect upon our own needs, determine our priorities and put forward proposals for change. I feel sure that you would agree that a return to such token consultation is neither desirable nor tenable." By the time the DIA came up with their housing proposals in the fall of 1974, Judd Buchanan was at the helm and, as expected, there were substantial differences between the NIB and the DIA plans.

The DIA's goal in the housing drive was merely "to achieve expansion and improvement through the construction of new housing and the rehabilitation of existing houses." In effect, the DIA philosophy hadn't really changed since the 1930s when the housing crisis was addressed by giving each family a small lumber allotment.

For Manuel and the NIB, housing construction and improvement was part of a much broader drive toward economic development and political independence. To realize any important gains, the Indian people had to be in control of the entire housing project, from financing to design to construction.

The conflict over the housing issue was the first serious skirmish between Buchanan and Manuel, but that battle would soon escalate into a sort of guerrilla war between the NIB and the DIA.

* * *

While that battle was still brewing, Manuel was also pursuing his international agenda. In organizing the international conference, the greatest obstacle he faced was locating and identifying legitimate Indigenous organizations that could represent their people at the conference.

Those initial contacts were difficult to make, since most of the Indian organizations in places like Central and South America were weak and local in nature. Many of their leaders were also suspicious of the NIB because they feared it might be another organization of anthropologists who were trying to co-opt their organizations rather than join with them in the struggle. For their part, NIB organizers also had to be very careful that they weren't dealing with government-controlled organizations.

These issues were of particular concern to Manuel. Rodrigo Contreras recalled that he would get calls in the middle of the night to check on the government links of some group in Guatemala or to present a complete breakdown of the political situation in Paraguay by morning. As with everyone else, he was expected to get the information, even if he had to stay

up all night to do it.

One important task that Manuel took on personally was getting non-governmental organization status at the United Nations for the NIB. He flew to New York to present the NIB's case, and when the U.N. agreed to accept the NIB's membership on February 6, 1974, he described the day as "the most historic event" in his life. Representation at the U.N., he hoped, would "lead the Indian Canadians and the Indigenous minorities of the world into the arena of world politics by having their problems heard in an international forum."[7]

Manuel was not planning to use the U.N. status solely for the NIB. From the beginning, he intended to transfer it to the international Indigenous body when it was set up, and he took a major step in that direction in early April when he left for the preparatory meeting in Guyana with representatives from the Māoris, the Australian Aborigines, the Sámi, the National Congress of American Indians and several Latin American Indigenous groups. The Guyanese government hosted the meeting, and the prime minister of Guyana, Forbes Burnham, showed up at the opening social.

Along with Manuel, the NIB delegation included Marie Marule, Doug Sanders and Guy Lavallee; the Canadian delegates had only one question to ask the other representatives: was the idea of an Indigenous peoples' organization feasible? The answer was unanimous: not only was it feasible, it was a necessary and long overdue step in the battle to regain their national sovereignty.

As Doug Sanders recalled, the meeting "faced the problem of virtual instant agreement by the delegates to proceed with the proposal of the NIB to hold the international conference."[8] The rest of the four-day conference gave the delegates a chance to hammer out a more precise definition of "Indigenous people." According to the delegates: "The term Indigenous people refers to people living in countries which have a population composed of differing ethnic or racial groups, who are descendants of the earliest populations living in the area and who do not as a group control the national government of the countries in which they live."[9]

The group then made arrangements for a follow-up meeting in Copenhagen early in 1975 and for a founding assembly of a new organization that would be held in Canada later that year. When the meeting broke up, Manuel was invited on a junket to eastern Brazil by the Guyanese

interior minister where they were able to meet with a small group of Brazilian Indians. Lavallee recalls that Manuel's first reaction when he got off the plane was to stroll into the village to meet not only the leaders, but also the ordinary people who were as drawn to the limping round-faced Canadian Indian leader as he was to them.

When Manuel returned to Ottawa, he was optimistic about the progress on the international front, but he soon found himself mired in housekeeping work. He was approaching the end of his second mandate, and it was time to make some staff changes. With his increasing workload in setting up the international organization, he decided that he would need a vice president who could take charge of things when he was away. Omer Peters was still respected in the Indian world, but he was getting on in years and was finding the amount of travel required difficult.

Peters had mentioned this a few times and said he was thinking of retiring before the August general meeting of the NIB in Vancouver. But by the spring, he still hadn't made any definite moves, so Manuel decided to give him a nudge.

In April, he sent Peters to represent him at the UBCIC's general assembly in Williams Lake. The DIA minister was also attending the meeting, and Manuel arranged for Peters to travel in style with the minister on the Department of Transport Jet Star.

When Peters arrived in Williams Lake, he was surprised to find that the Union had organized a retirement party for him, and he was feted with warm speeches about his four-year tenure as the vice president.

News of Peters' impending retirement spread across the country, and if Peters hadn't totally made up his mind about retiring before the trip, there was no question that he was on his way out afterward.

Manuel had Peters' replacement, Clive Linklater, lined up, and when the Vancouver assembly was held that August, Manuel was once again unopposed for his third two-year term as the national Chief of Canada's First Nations.

Linklater's arrival on the scene was part of a general infusion of younger blood in the leadership positions of the NIB. The organization began to profit from a wave of young Indian lawyers and other professionals who were coming out of graduate schools in the mid-1970s.

Ron Shackleton graduated from law school and returned to work full-time with the NIB in 1974. While in school, Shackleton had continued to do

contract work for the NIB, and he and Roberta Jamieson, a Mohawk law student who later went on to become Ontario's Ombudsman, founded the Native Indian Law Students' Association, an organization that acted as a talent scout for the NIB.

Manuel had been the featured speaker when the Law Students' Association was launched. Once again, though, he cautioned the Indian students about the "European educational system that teaches and encourages individualism, a school system that has driven our people and communities apart and is destroying our cultural powers, identity and independence of Indian peoples in Canada." When speaking about education, Manuel began to put the emphasis on the traditional Indian values that had to be reinforced by Indian education as much as on the issue of Indian control.

> We want our children to learn Canadian history which gives honour to the customs, values, accomplishments and contributions of this country's original inhabitants and First Citizens. We want our children to learn how to add, subtract, multiply and divide, but we don't want them to become greedy and grasping in the process. We want our children to learn science and technology so that they can promote the harmony of man with nature—not destroy it. We want our children to learn about their fellow men in literature and social studies, and in the process to learn to respect the values and culture of others.

But he was afraid that along the way they might lose the Indian wisdom his grandparents had learned from their grandparents and had passed on to him along with the language and the culture of the Shuswap Nation.[10]

Shackleton and Jamieson were among those who managed to combine academic achievement with the traditional values Manuel had spoken of. They were both valuable sources of expertise for the NIB and engaged in research, prepared submissions to government departments and represented the NIB at various meetings. Jamieson was sent to trade-union and related conferences to give workshops on Canadian Indians and their struggle for sovereignty, and Shackleton represented the NIB at a national conference of the Canadian Law Teachers Association. Both of them also sat on a committee on Indigenous Peoples and the law headed by Warren Allmand.

Along with the two Native lawyers, a young Mohawk law student at Queen's University, Bill Badcock, was employed to work with Native inmates in Kingston. He became a good friend of Manuel and, eventually, an NIB staffer. Badcock and others remember some mighty all-night parties that were somehow fitted around their hectic work schedules, and Manuel was generally in the thick of it.

His stamina seemed, at times, almost superhuman. As the movement advanced, more NIB staffers were hired until he was heading a team of almost fifty people. At the same time, there were always more meetings with ministers, more briefs to be drawn up, more strategy sessions to be conducted and endless travel to consult with provincial and local leaders.

There were few opportunities for him to go out to dinner with Marlene or to enjoy his favourite form of relaxation: sitting at home with the phone unplugged and watching a western on television. It was inevitable that the twenty years of struggle, relentless travel and sleepless nights would take a toll. Early in 1975, a medical check-up revealed irregularities in his heart. Manuel's doctor told him that he was headed for trouble and told him to take a prolonged rest or he would find himself with serious health problems.

Manuel had, in fact, been feeling the strain after four years in the Ottawa pressure-cooker. He knew he could use a couple of months back in Neskonlith to recharge his spiritual as well as physical batteries, but this was impossible. He was still pressing the DIA to implement the NIB's "Indian Control of Education" brief and their economic development and housing proposals. But under Buchanan, the Department was offering even more resistance than it had under Chrétien. On the international scene, he was trying to finalize the arrangements for the Indigenous peoples' conference. But one of Manuel's biggest challenges in 1975 was one that even he could not have foreseen: the sudden and uproarious self-destruction of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs.

Chapter 14: Political Eruptions in British Columbia, 1975

> The 1975 Union assembly assumed a life of its own. It became a political and cultural revival meeting.
>
> Paul Tennant, *Aboriginal People and Politics*, 178

After the Guyana meeting in April 1974, the National Indian Brotherhood set up a secretariat, headed by Marie Marule, with a mandate to organize the international peoples' conference and outline the structure of a permanent organization. George Manuel's enthusiasm for the idea continued to grow throughout 1974, and by the spring of 1975 the organizers were ready for a second preparatory meeting where the final details of the conference and the shape of the new organization would be ironed out.

That meeting was held in Copenhagen in May 1975; Manuel, Marule and Rodrigo Contreras represented the NIB. The first item on the agenda was to decide on the date and the location of the founding meeting. The delegates chose Canada in the fall of 1975, but in reality they were only confirming a decision Manuel had already made. With the sponsorship of the UBCIC, he had arranged to hold the conference in October on a Nuu-Chah-Nulth Reserve near Port Alberni on Vancouver Island.

Manuel was chosen as the organizing chair of the new organization with board members from New Zealand, the U.S., Norway, Sweden and Greenland.

The board finalized a list of organizations from twenty countries that would be invited to the founding meeting and reviewed the organization's financing, which had reached a modest total of $87,000 in two years.

The last item on the agenda was to choose a name for the organization. Marule suggested they take a leaf from the World Council of Churches book and call it the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP). The name was accepted, and after four years of planning, the international Indigenous organization was about to become a reality.

The NIB delegation headed home with a sense of elation. But their high spirits were dashed when they arrived in Ottawa and heard that one of

their closest friends and comrades, Ron Shackleton, was dead.

Shackleton's death had come without warning after a typically busy week and weekend devoted to the cause. On Friday June 20, he had been in Toronto to attend the annual conference of the Association of Friendship Centres. On Saturday he had driven to La Macaza, Quebec to attend a Métis and non-Status Indians conference, and on Sunday he was back in Ottawa to attend a meeting of the Native Law Students' Association.

On Monday he was supposed to attend a seminar on Natives and Criminal Justice, but the twenty-six-year-old Mohawk lawyer had a heart attack early Monday morning, and he was dead within hours.

Manuel was devastated by the news. At the funeral he said Shackleton had represented the best of the new generation of Indian activists because he was someone who truly understood the people. Manuel suggested that he had seen in Shackleton a future leader of the NIB.

"Ron and I came from the same background," he added. "A very poor background. He understood my commitment to the Indian people because his commitment was just as strong. . . . I can only say, that when I heard of his sudden death, I thought, why him? Why not me? He had his whole life in front of him and I have my life behind me."[1]

Shackleton's death was a great personal as well as political loss for George, but he would have little time to mourn his fallen comrade as he found himself locked in an escalating series of disputes with the new minister of Indian Affairs. The problems began in the spring of 1975 when Buchanan issued a wide range of new guidelines on DIA funding without consulting the Indian organizations. When Manuel heard about the changes, he felt that he was back in 1969 when Chrétien had done precisely the same thing. He protested Buchanan's unilateral guidelines and the response was the same as it had been from Chrétien six years earlier: a bureaucratic stonewall.

While Manuel and Buchanan were exchanging angry letters over the issue, the Department announced it was backing out of the previous NIB-DIA agreements on education. Despite DIA foot-dragging under Chrétien, a number of important steps had been taken to implement the NIB education policy. By early 1975, sixty bands, representing roughly twenty percent of the Indian population in the country, had total or partial control of their schools.

The DIA decided to shelve the policy in March 1975 after Buchanan

stated that there would be “no more transfers of Indian children from provincial schools to reserve schools under Indian control” because the program was too expensive and was “a set-back to integration.”[2]

George Manuel then began quietly working on a counterstrategy that focused on the areas where the DIA had already dismantled its infrastructure for delivering education and other social services. If negotiations between the NIB and the DIA became deadlocked, he would threaten to walk away from all cooperation with the government and drop everything back into its lap. For the DIA, this would create a bureaucratic nightmare, and he was counting on that threat to win negotiating points.

Even more troubling for Manuel than the moratorium on education reform was Buchanan’s land claims policy. From the start, the minister made it clear that he would try to make the same sort of cash for land deals in the Yukon as the Quebec Cree had been forced to sign.

In the spring of 1975, Buchanan announced that he had reached an agreement in principle with the Yukon Indians for the extinguishment of their land claim in exchange for $50 million and a parcel of land. This time George Manuel did not stay in the background as he had when Billy Diamond was signing away the Crees’ Aboriginal title to Northern Quebec. A Yukon deal that extinguished Aboriginal titles, coming so close after the Quebec deal, would set an almost ironclad precedent that would make the recognition of Aboriginal title in British Columbia and the NWT almost impossible.

For the first time in his tenure at the NIB, Manuel went public and denounced not only the federal government for its extinguishment policy, but also the Yukon Brotherhood for agreeing in principle to the government’s offer. He then used every ounce of behind-the-scenes influence he had to force the Yukon Brotherhood to withdraw from the agreement.

With his public denunciation and back room politicking, Manuel succeeded in blocking the deal. As a Canadian Press report put it, “After Manuel’s intervention, a ‘no Aboriginal rights extinguishment policy’ was adopted by the Yukon Brotherhood as a condition for signing the final deal with the government.”[3] The government, however, held fast to its extinguishment demand and the whole package was sent back to the negotiators.

It was in this charged atmosphere that another cabinet minister, the multi-millionaire defence minister James Richardson, made his contribution to Native and non-Native understanding by telling *Maclean's* magazine that he couldn't understand why the Indians were kicking up such a fuss. "I mean, what did they ever do for Canada? Did they discover gas? Did they discover oil? They didn't even invent the wheel. Why, when we came here, they were still dragging things around on two sticks."[4]

Manuel responded to the Richardson statement with an open letter expressing frustration and outrage:

> When your people came we helped you because you were men, like us, and there was so much you did not know. We taught your people how to hunt, how to eat, how to travel. But your people learned only how to survive, you would not learn how to live.
>
> Many of us died from your weapons and diseases. Many of us have died inside because you have taken away the surroundings on which our inner lives were built. This land was our soul. And it is upon the souls of thousands of our people that this country has been formed.

He concluded by stating that in "the quality of living based on relationships with the world around you, your people have contributed little to this country. With all the material comforts of your outside lives, you have not yet learned how to live. We feel sorry for you."[5]

The fact that the same kind of open racism directed at Native people that was common in the 1930s was still flourishing at the highest levels was disheartening for Manuel; he saw the education of the non-Native majority as a crucial part of the Indian movement. How much education remained to be done was confirmed a couple of months later when a Conservative Ontario MPP for the Timiskaming riding, Edward Havrot, dismissed the whole idea of settling land claims with the Indians because they were "just a damn nuisance. I could buy the Indian Chiefs off with a case of goof. . . . These damned Indians have gone absolutely wild. We should have given them a bunch of teepees and some cord wood and that's all."[6]

In the furor that followed, Premier Bill Davis asked for and received Havrot's resignation, but Havrot's resultant "apology" was even more insulting to the Indian peoples. He said his "life-long and best friend is Jewish, another is Estonian and married to a squaw."[7] Havrot then defied his own government and ran for the Conservative nomination in his riding. He won the nomination.

The battles with the DIA and the racist interventions by Richardson

and Havrot put Manuel in a fighting mood for the Joint Cabinet-NIB meeting in April.

Pierre Trudeau had appointed his right-hand man, Marc Lalonde, to head the government side of the committee, which met in both the spring and the fall of 1975. Manuel opened the April meeting by telling the ministers that Indian Nations would no longer settle for cash in land deals like the James Bay agreement or in the offer made to the Yukon Indian Brotherhood.

"We cannot consider nor accept any proposal or agreement which undermines or extinguishes our interests in Canada based upon our Aboriginal and treaty rights." He kept the same tone when he moved on to his report on economic development where he criticized the government's record and warned that "the situation of despair is creating a growing atmosphere of unrest, especially among the Indian youth under the age of twenty-five, which comprises more than fifty per cent of the total Indian population. The high Indian crime rate and the establishment of militant Indian Red Power in Canada is a reflection of mounting frustrations."[8]

The guarded threat of Indian violence seemed to have some impact on the cabinet because, by the end of the meeting, Manuel had won a number of important concessions. In a joint press release, he and Lalonde announced the creation of a new protocol for relations between Indians and the government. At the heart of it would be an expanded joint NIB-Cabinet Committee that would preside over a host of sub-committees addressing everything from Indian health and education to the reform of the Indian Act and the Indian land question. Both sides would have equal representation and the NIB influence was ensured when Manuel arranged to have Marie Marule elected as the first chair of the joint committee.

It was a significant breakthrough in securing First Nations access to the government; it is also interesting that the structure of the new committee was almost identical to the one Manuel had drawn up after his discussions with the Cabinet in 1971. Above the accompanying chart, he wrote INDIAN PEOPLE, and he warned his colleagues in the NIB that they would always have to keep their constituency in mind if they were to avoid being co-opted by the powerful political figures they would be dealing with.

Manuel's success with the Cabinet Committee only seemed to intensify his battle with the DIA. In the fall of 1975, he and the Department were locked in a war of words over Buchanan's unilaterally imposed DIA

guidelines. Buchanan had infuriated Manuel when he tried to pull an end-run on the NIB by claiming that twenty-two Saskatchewan bands supported his reorganization guidelines. Manuel quickly pointed out to the minister that a Saskatchewan all-Chiefs conference had already unanimously condemned the guidelines and he challenged the minister to produce the names of the twenty-two bands Buchanan claimed were in his corner.

Buchanan refused. In late September, the dispute came to a head when Manuel received word that the regional directors of the DIA were holding a private meeting in Winnipeg to discuss how the Department should deal with Indian organizations. He dispatched his vice president, Clive Linklater, to the meeting with a formal request that Linklater be accredited as an observer in the same way that DIA representatives were invited to NIB meetings. He also had a scathing statement to read to the DIA officials.

When Linklater arrived during the morning coffee break, he received a cool reception. When he asked the deputy minister, Arthur Kroeger, for observer status, Kroeger responded with the incomprehensible comment, "It's a nice day out, Clive." Linklater then requested that he be allowed to make a statement to the DIA staffers, but Kroeger repeated more forcefully, "It's a nice day out, Clive!" Linklater then asked the assistant deputy minister, Peter Lesaux, for a copy of the meeting's agenda and he received the same childish response, "It's a nice day out, Clive!" A reporter who had heard the exchange asked Lesaux why he refused to listen to Linklater's statement; Lesaux brushed him off by stating that "It's just the same thing we have heard before."[9]

In the end, Linklater was forced to read the NIB message to the directors' empty chairs as all but three DIA officials left the room when he began to speak. As it turned out, it *wasn't* a message the Department had heard before. Linklater told the near-empty room that the NIB and its member organizations "do not consider that Indian people are responsible to the Department of Indian Affairs; rather that the Indian Affairs officials should be responsible to the Indian people." The statement accused the bureaucrats of treating the NIB and its member organizations "as a 'third force' "—maybe even as an enemy force.

> If you consider the Indian organizations to be your 'enemies,' then by the very nature of our organizations, the Indian people at the Band level are also your enemies.
>
> Maybe you should simply declare open war on the Indian people. That way, you could accomplish your cherished goal of TERMINATION of the special federal responsibility and

> relationship to the Indian people by the simple expedient of the actual physical EXTERMINATION of the Indian people.[10]

The statement ended with a warning that "If you persist to view us as the enemy, we will be forced to act as the enemy." When Manuel later recounted the snub of Linklater to the prime minister, he warned that his organization's relations with Judd Buchanan were steadily deteriorating and charged that Buchanan was "setting back Federal Government-Indian relations by at least ten years."[11]

Trudeau apparently agreed because in less than a year Buchanan was out and a new minister, Warren Allmand, was in. From the Indians' point of view it was a welcome change. Allmand had begun to take an interest in Indian Affairs a couple of years earlier when he was the solicitor general. On a tour of some northern reserves, he had discovered conditions that were not much different from the crushing poverty he had seen in India.

Allmand also had a first-hand experience of problems between Native peoples and the justice system when he was driving at night through Prince Albert, Saskatchewan with a couple of local Indian leaders. An RCMP car began following them and the Mounties pulled the Indians over on a pretext. They began to harass the Indians until they realized that their boss, the solicitor general, was sitting in the back seat.[12] This incident led to Allmand working with the NIB to set up a National Conference on Native Peoples and the Criminal Justice System in February 1975. The conference explored a wide range of injustices toward Canada's Native peoples by the courts and the police, and Allmand emerged as a noted backer of the Indian cause.

When he became the Indian Affairs minister in September 1976, however, his good intentions quickly fell victim to the bureaucracy. His open policy toward Indians led to a mini revolt in his own department, led by his deputy minister, Arthur Kroeger. The row with Kroeger and the rest of the hard-line DIA bureaucrats resulted in Allmand being shifted out of the portfolio barely a year after his appointment.[13]

For Manuel, though, the battle with the DIA in the summer of 1975 reflected his growing impatience with the progress he was making in Ottawa. When he attended an April 2 Land Claims Conference sponsored by the UBCIC in Terrace, BC, he showed just how high his frustration was when he told his British Columbia friends that he felt he was wasting his

time in Ottawa.[14] To illustrate the point, he told them about a recent visit to the DIA office in Ottawa with the NWT Brotherhood leader, James Wah-Shee. The federal court had recently awarded the Indians of the Northwest Territories a caveat on the lands north of sixty, and James Wah-Shee had come to Ottawa to demand that the government begin land claim negotiations.

The DIA official shrugged off the court order. He told Wah-Shee that all it did was force the Department to bargain with Indians. "If you push too hard, that means if you demand too much, then we are not going to settle with you and our negotiations will break down, then we will have to go to Parliament and they will have to hand down a decision settling the claims with or without your participation." In other words, the NIB leader explained,

> there is no way the Federal Government is prepared to settle the land claims within your terms.
>
> They are saying . . . we recognize Aboriginal Rights, Land Claims, only if you accept the terms under which we recognize it. . . . Only if you accept the settlement we are prepared to give you. That is what they told the Indians of James Bay and they accepted it.

As Manuel saw it, that "is not justice, that is white supremacy, that is racism."[15]

In a statement that revealed something of Manuel's future strategy, he spoke about the government only responding to political power and pointed out that since the Native peoples didn't have the votes to pressure the government, they would have to find other means. Once again, he wouldn't rule out violence. In fact, it might even be inevitable.

"Younger people," he said, "are going to be forced to resort to the politics of violence. I think it is going to come even if we don't want it."[16]

Manuel's musings in Terrace were not entirely in the abstract. Radicalism was growing in British Columbia with young Indian activists threatening road and rail blockades and other acts of civil disobedience to get government action. The youth wing of the British Columbia movement was also adopting an increasingly leftist analysis of the Indian struggle, which identified with the anti-capitalist and anti-colonialist movements in Canada and abroad.

Young activists like Bob Manuel began holding workshops around the province detailing the corporate role in usurping Indian lands and in

blocking the modern-day movement to recuperate them. Within the Union, that point of view was being pushed hardest by a number of non-Native consultants who were also working the back rooms to urge the young activists into more and more radical actions—including breaking off all relations with the government and refusing government funding so they couldn't be "co-opted" by the system. This outside pressure, combined with an internal challenge to the Union's leadership, resulted in a political eruption in British Columbia that would lead to the near destruction of the UBCIC.

The internal opposition was led by Bill Wilson, who had begun working for the Union in 1970 when he was a law student and had been given the job of assisting Davie Fulton in putting together the Union's constitution and position paper on Aboriginal title and land claims.

Wilson had come from a wealthy coastal family and he had no real experience with the Indian movement at the band level. But he was convinced that it was time for a new generation of leaders, those with university educations, to take control of the movement.

As early as 1971, the twenty-eight-year-old Wilson explained that he thought "the reality of the situation is that people with a grade-eight education can't confront people with law degrees."[17] It was around this time that George Manuel, the national leader with a grade-two education, went out to dinner with Wilson in Vancouver. As Wilson tells it, Manuel didn't know how to eat escargot, nor did he know that he was supposed to taste the wine Wilson ordered to accompany the meal and give his approval to the waiting wine steward. When he finally got that straight, Manuel reportedly turned to the waiter and said, "That's good, bring us a gallon!"[18] For Wilson, it was an indication of Manuel's lack of sophistication. Others who have heard Wilson tell the story suspect that Manuel was putting the young, "sophisticated" law student on.

Despite Wilson's elitist sensibility, he made himself a spokesman for the grassroots in both the Union and the British Columbia Association of Non-Status Indians (BCANSI) with whom he worked for a time. As Paul Tennant observed, the fact that

> Wilson should emerge as the leading advocate of grassroots politics was a paradox, for among all the young Indians playing leading roles in BCANSI or the Union, he had the least grassroots experience. He had had no local political or administrative experience in either an Indian band or a BCANSI local. His reputation rested on the prominence of his own family among the

Kwagiulth.[19]

In both organizations, Wilson's specialty was assailing the "brown bureaucracy."

His prominence grew after 1974 when the Union set up its own programs for social services, housing, education and cultural matters with the aim of replacing the DIA in the province with an Indian-controlled administration. Wilson attacked not only the expansion of the Union but the whole philosophy behind accepting core funding from the government.

As he put it: "Core funding robbed us of the kind of leaders we once had. It's robbed us of the Andy Paulls. . . . We now have these welfare recipients who exist on core funding and who would not be in the movement if there were no financial gain."[20] Wilson's calls for a return to the past of Paull dovetailed neatly with the agenda of the radical activists, and his sniping at the Union leadership as "brown bureaucrats" and the Council of Elders as opportunistic boozers fostered suspicions between the local and provincial leaders.

But Wilson had another important issue to pursue. He was fighting for the removal of the distinction between Status and non-Status Indians. He had a personal stake in this in that his own mother had lost her Status when she married a white man. Instead of addressing that obvious injustice directly, he appealed for one big organization of Status and non-Status Indians, which he defined as people with at least one-quarter Indian ancestry. Not surprisingly, he found little support among the Status Indians who understood that their battles were often complementary to those of the non-Status Indians, but they were not identical.

As Phillip Paul explained, "politically, it's a good idea to have Status and non-Status together, but there are different objectives. When it comes to negotiating the land issue, you have to have something to give from both sides. The government has to want something, and you obviously want something from them."[21] The Status Indians had a bargaining position because they had their reserve lands and a recognition under the Indian Act of a kind of special status. The non-Status and Métis peoples were not included in the Act and were, in fact, under provincial jurisdiction. Status Indians feared that by including the non-Status and Métis peoples in the movement, they would be weakening their case in any negotiations with the federal government.

The issue remained a touchy one, however. Non-Status and Métis peoples often felt hurt by the rebuff they received from the Status Indians, and the Status Indians were often uncomfortable with the fact that by holding onto the Status/non-Status distinction they were perpetuating divisions in their ranks that had been made by an Indian Act they had no control over.

All of these currents—leftist radicalism, internal criticism and Status/non-Status tensions—came together in an electrical explosion on the floor of the Union's annual assembly in Chilliwack in April 1975. As Tennant saw it, the Chilliwack meeting "assumed a life of its own. It became a political and cultural revival meeting that had a profound emotional significance for many of those taking part." The speeches became increasingly radical as the meeting wore on, and this radicalism was fired still further by the traditional drumming, dancing and singing. Wilson then stepped into this euphoric combination of cultural pride and political defiance to present a resolution that the Union reject core funding from the government.

Just as the delegates were about to vote on the matter, a telegram arrived from Manuel, who was back in Ottawa and unaware of what was transpiring at the assembly. The telegram spoke of the strategy he and the NIB were developing to fight Judd Buchanan's cutbacks in education and other social services by threatening to turn the programs back to the government. Manuel asked for the Union's support for his tactical manoeuvre.

When the telegram was read on the floor, it was misinterpreted to mean that the NIB leader had joined the radicals in backing the rejection of all government funding. If there was any chance of defeating the motion before Manuel's words were read to the assembly, it disappeared after. The resolution that British Columbia Indian organizations and Indian bands immediately reject all government funds passed by a massive majority, and the young activists believed they were starting a national snowball that would roll across the country, liberating all Native peoples from the government's shackles.

As Tennant pointed out, "Without having consulted the grassroots, the advocates of grassroots control were now demanding that Indian communities and individuals give up all government financial support, including local administration grants, educational financing and welfare

payments."[22]

When it came time to elect the new three-person executive, Wilson and George Watts, who had backed the funding refusal, were elected along with Phillip Paul. Paul and Watts eventually found it impossible to work with Wilson and resigned. The Union was in tatters.*

It had no funds, no central machinery and worse, no plans to back up the dramatic gesture made in Chilliwack. Paul and the original Union leadership met in Victoria to try to analyze what had happened. They watched videotapes of the meeting to try to see who the hell had organized the disorder. Bob Manuel was present at this meeting. Unknown to the rest, he had been one of the radicals who helped whip up the assembly, and he found himself watching the video and hoping that Paul and the others didn't see his role; his nervousness increased when Doug Sanders pointed at the screen and exclaimed, "Can't you see, the staff did it!" Bob Manuel sunk down in his chair. He was relieved when Sanders' comment went unanswered and the final conclusion was that what had happened was a spontaneous "peoples' movement." After the Victoria meeting, Bob Manuel and the other young activists drifted home to wait for further orders from their leaders. As Bob Manuel put it, after the euphoria of Chilliwack

> everybody was waiting for our political masters to call us together and say, here, let's plan out the next phase, let's move on. They didn't do that. . . . Among the workers, we thought that somebody else was working on the Second Phase, the Master Plan. And finally, when we gradually got together . . . we discovered that there was no Master Plan.[23]

In fact, the only one with any plan at all was Wilson who tried to take advantage of the confusion to transform the Union into a Status and non-Status organization. To accomplish this, he began to push for a formal merger of the Union with the British Columbia Association of Non-Status Indians, which was reportedly giving him funds to help with his living expenses after the Union payroll was cut off.[24]

By this time, however, George Manuel was quietly moving back into the picture. He began a tour of British Columbia at the end of May with stops in Kamloops, Lillooet, Vancouver, Mount Currie and back to Vancouver to try to assess the situation. Before heading east, he stopped in Kamloops again where Bob and some of the younger workers had called a thinly attended meeting that turned into more of a powwow than a political event. After it was over, George and Bob headed to Neskonlith and took a

drive up to Neskonlith Lake in the hills behind the reserve to have a little chat.

Manuel and his son, who had had a rather turbulent relationship in the past, were about to become close political allies in a bid to salvage what they could of the disruption of the Union.

Through his contacts inside the DIA and elsewhere, Manuel had learned that the Native Brotherhood was making a move to get the Union's core funding, and he told his son that they had to get the money back "or the Union's dead. The fact of life is you've got to have money. I've worked without money and I know what it's like. Without money, you've got no base to organize." George suggested his son push for an all-Chiefs meeting and "run for the executive. You've got to get elected."[25]

The opening for the all-Chiefs conference came after Phillip Paul and George Watts resigned. Bob Manuel and others immediately began to call for a new election at a special all-Chiefs conference. When the conference was called, Don Moses was given the job of coordinator and Bob "pulled in behind him and said, okay, I'll work with Don as an assistant coordinator for the logistics." Bob explained that "Don's job was to go around and promote the conference and my job was to get the facility, get the tables and chairs and all that kind of stuff." But Bob unilaterally expanded his job description. Without telling anyone he intended to run for a place on the executive, he travelled around the province, meeting with Chiefs and sounding them out on their feeling about the Union and the issues of the day.

The fact that everyone still considered him as just a worker allowed him to get information that would have been denied an official candidate. On the eve of the conference, he found himself sitting in a Kamloops bar with Wilson and a few others while Wilson explained his strategy. When the elections took place, Wilson said, he would have Bill Lightbown, the head of the Association of Non-Status Indians, run with him for one of the three executive positions. With him and Lightbown controlling the Union executive, the merger between the Union and the Association would be a fait accompli.

Up to that point, it looked like Don Moses was the only one who could stand up to Wilson, but during the conference Moses took such a verbal beating from Wilson that his star was fading, and Wilson and Bill Lightbown appeared assured of victory.

But when the nominations were called for, the Manuel camp began to move. Word of Bob Manuel's candidacy spread through the hall and the young radicals who had worked with him and the older leaders who had worked with his father began to line up behind him.

As promised, Wilson had Lightbown nominated along with a few others who were considered long shots. When the votes were tallied, Wilson had retained his place on the executive and Bob Manuel had been elected to his first leadership position with the same number of votes as Wilson. The third member, however, was not Lightbown, but Steve Point, an artist who had been urged to run by his Stó:lō people.

Wilson was disappointed that his strategy hadn't worked, but he was apparently comforted by the fact that his co-executive members were young and inexperienced. Immediately after the vote, he called an emergency meeting of the executive and tried to have himself installed as the head of the Union executive. As Bob Manuel remembered it, Wilson said something to the effect, "Well, fellows, I've got the most seniority here. So I guess you guys should concede that I'm the chairman."[26]

Bob Manuel's reaction to Wilson's move was not so much political as personal. He knew there would be hell to pay from his father if he let Wilson walk all over him, so he told Wilson that "I didn't run to give everything over to you. I got a lot of people who are supporting me out there." Point echoed Bob's protest and suggested that they forget the whole idea of a chairman for the moment and just try to work together.

When Bob Manuel came out of his first meeting with Wilson, he found his father waiting for him. George Manuel had slipped into town on his way to an NWT Indian Brotherhood assembly where the Dene were about to release their historic declaration of nationhood. He wanted to talk to his son about what he felt needed to be done to protect the Union, so he told Bob that he was "seconding" him to Yellowknife.[27]

On the plane, Bob Manuel was still pleased by his victory, but he remembers telling his father that he didn't feel any different now that he was a leader. Manuel nodded. When they arrived in Yellowknife, Bob called Steve Point who had some interesting news. Wilson had offered the use of his downtown Vancouver apartment, his telephone, everything, for the Union's head office.

At first glance, Bob Manuel considered it a generous offer. After all,

the Union had no funding and nowhere else to go. When he told his father about it, Manuel was silent for a moment. Then he said, “You know, Bobby, you said you didn’t feel any different. Well, I’m going to tell you, you better start feeling different right now. That guy is taking over on you guys. With your consent, he’s going to control the Union. You’re going to get squeezed right out. You better get back on the phone to Steve and call an executive meeting and you better meet with Steve privately.”

George Manuel went to bed early that night. The international conference was only a few months away, he had declared war against Buchanan and the DIA bureaucracy in Ottawa, and now he also had to figure out how to untangle the political mess in British Columbia. It was the kind of moment when even the most politically committed would wonder if it was all worth it. But Manuel had an uncanny ability to look at the positive side of things, no matter how hard he had to squint to see it. He had learned from Chilliwack that there was a grassroots protest movement developing in British Columbia that could be harnessed in future battles. The rejection of funding might have been a tactical error because it was premature. But the motivation behind it, to get the Department of Indian Affairs off the backs of the First Nations, was one of the goals he had been striving for since he had confronted the Indian Agent at the Adams Lake meeting twenty years earlier.

The next day would also bring a positive development. His reason for being in the north was to attend the Fort Simpson Assembly where the Dene Declaration of Nationhood would be unveiled. While it was specifically a Dene document, the principles it expounded fit closely with Manuel’s political goals for the movement in Canada and throughout the Fourth World, and it remains one of the most important statements on Indian nationhood ever written in Canada. It began with the simple, direct statement.

> We the Dene of the N.W.T. insist on the right to be regarded by ourselves and the world as a nation.
>
> As once Europe was the exclusive homeland of the European peoples, Africa the exclusive homeland of the African peoples, the New World, North and South America, was the exclusive homeland of Aboriginal peoples of the New World, the AmerIndian and the Inuit.
>
> The New World like other parts of the world has suffered the experience of colonialism and imperialism. Other peoples have occupied the land—often with force—and foreign governments have imposed themselves on our people. Ancient civilizations and ways of life have been destroyed.

> We the Dene are part of the Fourth World. And as the peoples and Nations of the world have come to recognize the existence and rights of those peoples who make up the Third World the day must come and will come when the nations of the Fourth World will come to be recognized and respected.[28]

The Declaration, with its brief historical analysis, its reference to the Fourth World and to independence and self-government for the Dene Nation within Canada, reflected the main currents of Manuel's thought. As it turned out, though, he would not be present when the Declaration was formally made.

The next day, George and Bob Manuel met with James Wah-Shee in their hotel lobby in Yellowknife for the drive over to Fort Simpson in a rental car. But before they got under way, Manuel said he wasn't feeling well and asked Bob to drive while he lay down in the back seat. Bob had assumed that his father was just tired, but when they were a short way out of town George said, "Take me back to the hospital. I can't go on."[29]

Bob Manuel dropped his father off at the emergency room and found out that Manuel had just had a heart attack. The doctor's warning that Manuel had to curtail his activities or face a serious health crisis had proven true.

The NIB president remained only a few days in the Yellowknife hospital before he was flown to a hospital in Ottawa. His doctor told him that the damage had been minimal but reiterated his warning about slowing down. At the age of fifty-four, however, Manuel would not, or could not, get off the buckin' horse. The founding World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) meeting was just months away, the Union was still teetering on the brink and Buchanan seemed bent on rolling back the gains the NIB had made over the previous five years. So he would deal with his heart problem the way he had dealt with his twisted hip: by ignoring it.

By mid-summer, he was back on his feet and ready to take on Buchanan, who in the final weeks of his tenure as minister of Indian Affairs compared the Dene to Quebec-style separatists.

The NIB leader pointed out that the Dene Declaration had stated clearly that what they sought was "independence and self-determination *within the country of Canada*.[30] "When Mr. Wah-Shee speaks," Manuel added,

> he speaks for an underdeveloped colony (you may say territory if you wish). Yet no less a person than the minister, the highest official responsible as a trustee for Mr. Wah-Shee and his

people, deliberately chooses to misinterpret the intent of the Dene Declaration and drag these lofty principles down to the level of a separatist movement.[31]

George kept up his denunciations of Buchanan during a cross-country tour that fall that took him as far east as Labrador and then back across to British Columbia to meet with the interior Chiefs to try to restore their lost faith in the Union. Then, on October 25, he headed still farther west, to Port Alberni on Vancouver Island, to meet with the Indigenous leaders from all over the world who were assembling for the founding convention of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples.

The Fourth World, an idea that George Manuel had formed four years earlier, was about to get a body and a voice of its own.

---

* Doreen Manuel: Peter says that “The rejection of funding had been a serious tactical error because it was premature.” I remember being right by my brother Chief Bob Manuel’s side as we lived through the rejection of funds on the Neskonlith reserve. It was a turning point for Neskonlith. I know that singular experience changed us forever. It was like our spiritual fast to come back into our power as a warrior peoples. As a young teen, I remember dad taking me home to Neskonlith to visit. One particular visit we drove through the village, that image is burned into my memory. Men and women stood out on the road swaying with drunkenness, a baby sat in a mud puddle in a soaking wet diaper crying. When we rejected funding, we had a band meeting and everyone agreed to participate. The ones who could not do without their alcohol moved to town to collect social services and our community dried up overnight. Sarah Deneault’s family planted potatoes in their large field, enough for the entire community; we planted squash; Susan August, Nora Narcisse, every garden contributed different selections. Those of us with hay fields all agreed to pool the earnings to pay hydro bills and pay for essentials that we couldn’t gather ourselves. Hunting and butchering parties were planned. As if overnight we shed our colonial blankets and stood up into independence. I was never more proud of my peoples and of my brother Bob as I was during that time. He led them through a life-changing era that would make each person whole again. I became a warrior woman and shed all fear and doubt. As a result of our resurgence as warriors, it was many of us who became the backbone of the Indian Child Caravan and Concerned Aboriginal Women’s Movement. It was many of the members of those two groups who eventually joined the

Constitution Express. Therefore, while a differently timed rejection of funds may have yielded a different history, the way it played out made a huge impact on our survival as a peoples.

Chapter 15: A Voice for the Fourth World, 1975–1976

> And rising up after centuries of oppression evoking the greatness of our ancestors in the memory of our Indigenous martyrs:
>
> We vow to control again our own destiny and recover our complete humanity and pride in being Indigenous People.
>
> WCIP Declaration, October 1975

Rodrigo Contreras was given the job of meeting the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) international Indigenous leaders as they arrived at Vancouver Airport on October 24 and 25, 1975. He remembers it as one of the most emotional moments of his life.

One by one they came, Māoris from New Zealand, Aborigines from Australia, Maya from Guatemala, Guaymis from Panama, Miskitos from Nicaragua, Inca from Bolivia, Sámi from Scandinavia, Inuit from Greenland and representatives of a dozen First Nations from Canada and the United States.

In all, fifty-two delegates and more than two hundred official observers from nineteen countries were ferried across the Georgia Strait to Nanaimo and the Nuu-Chah-Nulth community near Port Alberni on Vancouver Island. As they arrived, a feeling of history-in-the-making began to spread among the participants as they met and spoke with one another for the first time.

Together they represented millions of people who had been fighting for five hundred years against the European invasion that brought deadly diseases and a tidal wave of settlement and political domination under regimes that pursued policies ranging from assimilation to the outright extermination of Indigenous societies. Against all odds, the Fourth World had survived and was now prepared to take a step together toward regaining lost lands and liberty.

The first item on the agenda was a celebration of their mutual survival at a welcoming feast. Most of the delegates were dressed in their national costumes, and the Nuu-Chah-Nulth produced a lavish seafood banquet of their traditional foods, followed by a cultural celebration of Indigenous dancers, drummers and singers from around the world.

The meetings began the next day with George Clutesi, a Nuu-Chah-

Nulth artist and Elder, chanting an opening prayer.[1] George Manuel and other members of the Canadian delegation then gave brief welcoming speeches, and the delegates settled down to work. The first item of discussion was affiliation of the international Indigenous organization with the United Nations. The idea won overwhelming support, and the assembly broke into workshops to discuss the struggle for social and political justice, cultural identity and Indigenous lands and resources.

The only problem the delegates faced in the workshops was the one they had discovered in the first preparatory meeting in Guyana: They were in agreement on virtually every item on the agenda. They decided, therefore, to drop the remaining workshops and go directly into a full conference assembly to debate, and where necessary amend, the draft charter of the organization.

Manuel was careful not to impose his own views on the delegates. The draft charter, after all, had been largely drawn up in his office and he wanted everyone to have a chance to study it and to make whatever additions or deletions they thought necessary. When it came time to elect the first president of the WCIP, however, there was no question who the leader of the international movement was. Manuel was unopposed for the presidency and won unanimous support from the delegates.

Sam Deloria, from the U.S., was elected as Manuel's vice president, and Julio Dixon from Panama, Clemente Alcon from Bolivia, Nils Sara from Norway and Neil Watene from New Zealand made up the founding executive.[2] After the election, the delegates passed what they called a Solemn Declaration that addressed the spiritual as well as political unity of the Indigenous nations. It began and ended with an expression of historic pride and served as a manifesto for the struggle of regaining sovereignty. It read in part:

> We glory in our proud past:
>
> when the earth was our nurturing mother,
> when the night sky formed our common root,
> when Sun and Moon were our parents,
> when all were brothers and sisters,
> when our great civilizations grew under the sun.
>
> Then other peoples arrived:
>
> thirsting for blood, for gold, for land and all its wealth,
> carrying the cross and the sword, one in each hand, without knowing or waiting to learn the ways of our worlds, they considered us to be lower than the animals, they stole our lands from us and took us from our lands, they made slaves of the Sons of the sun.

And rising up after centuries of oppression
evoking the greatness of our ancestors
in the memory of our Indigenous martyrs:
We vow to control again our own destiny and
recover our complete humanity and
pride in being Indigenous People.[3]

Before the assembly was brought to a close, the delegates agreed that one of the first tasks of the WCIP would be to set up an international solidarity network to alert the member organizations and the world to any threat to the land, livelihood or culture of the Indigenous Nations. As the delegates left Vancouver for the far corners of the world, they left with a sense of hope. They would no longer face oppression in isolation. The WCIP would allow them to work together toward their common goals and give them a collective voice in the world through the United Nations.

During the fall of 1975 and the spring of 1976, Manuel devoted much of his time and energy to the WCIP cause. Once again, though, the main problem was one of financing the new organization. The NIB had covered most of the expenses of the WCIP Secretariat and all of Manuel's travel expenses, but to become a viable organization the WCIP needed to arrange its own funding sources.

The member organizations could offer little in the way of financial contributions since the WCIP was, to an even greater extent than Canadian Indian organizations, a poor peoples' organization. Just holding the conference had drained its coffers, and when it was over there was a need for a major fund-raising drive. So in March 1976, Manuel travelled to Geneva with his executive to attend an international conference of the United Nations NGOs where he was both promoting WCIP United Nations membership and trying to get financial support from wealthier organizations like the World Council of Churches. The WCIP Secretariat had also targeted the Canadian and Scandinavian governments as possible funding sources and began to lobby for funds from their foreign aid budgets.

During this period, Manuel found another valuable ally in his World Council work when he bumped into Dave Monture at the Saskatoon airport during one of his cross-country trips. They had known each other since 1970 when Monture reported on the NIB's Winnipeg conference for *Indian News,* and they met often in Ottawa through mutual friends. Manuel had asked Monture to come to work with him a couple of times before, but Monture had always turned him down with the excuse that he didn't think he had

much to offer.

This time, Manuel had him cornered on the plane, and by the time they reached Ottawa, Monture had agreed to work with the WCIP. The catch, though, was the same one that had confronted Guy Lavallee a couple of years earlier: Monture would have to find a way to pay his own salary. He accomplished this by arranging his own seconding from his job with the Public Service Commission to work for the WCIP.

In June, Manuel and Monture left for Inari, a small resort town in northern Finland, to attend the Ninth Nordic Sámi Council conference. Here, Manuel quickly signalled that his leadership of the WCIP would be a hands-on affair. The two men had been billeted in one of the resort cabins on the lakeshore, while most of the Sámi were camped in tents, eating out of doors and drinking a fair bit of vodka in the Sámi tradition of blowing off steam in the summertime.

Manuel and Monture ate most of their meals in the restaurant at the lodge and were surprised to find that reservations were required for every meal. They didn't understand the meaning of this until they came in for lunch with a couple of Sámi friends and were told that the restaurant was prepared to serve the Canadians, but not the Sámi, because they didn't have reservations.

Manuel suspected the Sámi were facing the same type of discrimination that Native People faced in Canada, so he started to raise hell. His English was so colourful that the manager had to get a translator and Manuel explained that he would go on Finnish television to say that he "had come all the way to Scandinavia only to witness blatant discrimination against the Sámi people." As the manager listened, he became more and more fidgety, and when Manuel finally finished, the manager mumbled something about a mistake and promised to take care of it. And he did. Not only were Manuel's Sámi friends served their lunch, the embarrassed manager opened up the restaurant that evening to the Sámi staying in tents and paid for a couple of rounds of drinks.[4] Needless to say, Manuel's intervention was popular among the rank and file, but it was not that welcome with the more conservative Sámi leadership who were concerned that the Canadian Indian was trying to undercut their leadership.

George Manuel in discussion with Nillas-Valkepaa and translator Kerttu Vuolab on his visit to Aanar, Inari Finland, for Sámi conference, 1976.

That concern increased as Manuel spent most of his time with the ordinary people on the lakeshore. After the conference, when he took a tour of Sámi reindeer-herding villages and studied their handicraft programs in Finland and Norway, he also made a point of meeting with and listening to the local people and the local leadership.

Monture recalled that, while the national Sámi leadership looked nervously on, many Sámi began to see Manuel not as a Canadian Indian who headed the WCIP, but as their own leader on the international front.[5] This sense increased in later years as Manuel often proved to be more successful at tapping the Scandinavian governments for funds than their own leadership. In the future, the identification of the Sámi grassroots with the Canadian Indian leader would be repeated with other Indigenous groups and, as in Finland, it would often create resentment among the national leadership.

Overall though, the Scandinavian trip served as a valuable tool in

raising the profile of the WCIP in northern Europe, and after he returned to Canada, Manuel decided to make the same sort of tour through Central America.

The Central American trip was one that he had wanted to take since he began planning the international organization four years earlier. The region had a large Indian population, and in countries like Guatemala the Indians were in a majority. Manuel believed Central America was "essential to the search for common solutions for the most oppressed peoples of the world."[6] It turned out to be a major and, in many ways, historic undertaking.

He and Rodrigo Contreras flew off to Mexico City on July 26. They stayed with Luis Lopez Hierra of the Centre for Popular Organization and went to visit the Toltec ruins in the outskirts of the capital. Manuel, with his bad leg and damaged heart, insisted on struggling to the top of the pyramids to gaze at the remains of the spectacular city that his southern cousins had created. It was a bittersweet moment. His first reaction was one of pride at the beauty his fellow American Indians had built. But Rodrigo Contreras remembers Manuel wondering out loud how such a tremendous civilization could have been crushed.

What it meant for the Indigenous People of today, he decided, was that the road back would be a long one. It wasn't enough to merely start an organization, publish a newsletter and travel around; it was going to take "blood, money and sweat" for Indigenous peoples to win back their birthright.[7]

While in Mexico, Manuel visited a number of Indigenous organizations as well as government officials. During the meetings, he was struck by "the paradox of a society attempting to free itself from imperialism and underdevelopment—economic and political oppression—yet through its policies and programs repressing Indigenous communities and exploiting their economics without any realization of the consequences of such policies and programs."[8] After leaving Mexico, they travelled to Guatemala where Manuel gained insights into the workings of the western hemisphere's most notorious apartheid regime. In Guatemala, almost two thirds of the people are Mayan Indians, but they have been stripped of all economic and political power in their own land and have been subjected to centuries of brutal repression.

During Manuel's visit, the Highland Indians were also recovering from one of the most devastating earthquakes to hit Central America in this

century, and most of the Indian organizations were involved in trying to feed and house the survivors. Manuel had heard about the earthquake just before he left and had set up a relief fund through the NIB and WCIP. He was able to bring a modest $5,257 contribution to the relief effort.

In Guatemala, Manuel contacted the local delegates from the Port Alberni conference and they took him and Contreras on a tour of the Highlands to meet with local Indian leadership. It was an exhausting ordeal for Manuel, who was asked to give three or four speeches a day and then go to public meetings in the evening.

They couldn't afford to rent a car, so they travelled on the crowded mountain buses that were frequently stopped by the army for ID and weapons checks, which led to long sessions standing on the dusty roadsides with their hands on their heads while they were frisked and questioned about their activities in Guatemala.

For Manuel, the ordeal was complicated by a nasty bout of dysentery, and he often found himself having to plead with Contreras to "get the bus to stop" so he could find a bathroom. Contreras would then ask the driver in Spanish to stop but, as he put it, there were "a lot of close calls."[9]

Yet despite his uncertain health, he was able to make some very interesting observations about what he saw in Guatemala and to tie them in with his Canadian experience. In the zones he visited, the earthquake reconstruction programs were well under way, but he observed serious flaws in the international aid effort.

"People from many Western European cultures, applying their knowledge and methods with good intentions," he reported, "were failing to appreciate the detrimental impact of their ideas, methods, mechanisms, etc. on the totally different lifestyles and experiences of the Indigenous peoples of Guatemala."[10]

There had been no consultation with respect to the goals, objectives, processes, systems for restoration or reconstruction, or development programs for the communities. This point was probably best illustrated by Canada's aid to Guatemala, which consisted of a gift of large quantities of powdered milk. The Canadian aid givers didn't bother to find out that few of the Guatemalan Maya could digest the product and it was, therefore, useless, even harmful, to those it was intended to help.

Another effect of the ignorance of this invading force of well-intentioned foreigners was that their money and materials often found their

way into the pockets of the wealthy or onto the thriving Guatemalan black market. By not insisting on delivering their aid directly to the Highland Indians, much of it was siphoned off long before it reached the people in need.

The fact that the foreign aid was being lost did not diminish the Maya's own reconstruction efforts. Instead, the people drew on their tradition of mutual aid and used the reconstruction campaign to revitalize their Indigenous organizations. After seeing how the people were able to quickly erect a leadership and an organization to deal with the crisis, Manuel suggested that, as tragic as the situation was, the earthquake could lead to a strengthened Indian movement in the future.

As it turned out, he was proved correct. In the aftermath of the earthquake, political and cultural organizational activity increased dramatically in Guatemala, and within a few years the Guatemalan Maya would organize the nationwide Campesinos Unity Committee (CUE) that would push for basic economic and social justice for the Mayan people. The Committee became a major force in the countryside's political life until a hurricane of government-backed terror swept through Guatemala at the end of the decade.

When their Guatemalan tour was over, Manuel and Contreras moved on to Nicaragua. They were met at the airport by a couple of their Port Alberni contacts, along with the deputy member of Parliament representing the Miskito people, and a group of Miskito university students.

The visitors were first taken to the home of one of the members of the reception committee where Manuel briefed them about the goals of the WCIP and held informal discussions which, in Contreras's words, turned into "a marathon session." In the politically charged atmosphere of Nicaragua in the mid-1970s, the students wanted to know if Manuel was advocating independence for Miskitia and whether that meant they should engage in revolutionary violence.

Manuel simply told them, "If you have to, you have to. Nobody can tell you how to carry out your struggle," but by whatever means they chose, they should fight relentlessly for their liberation.[11]

Manuel took the same message to the Miskito Coast, where he met with the local Miskito leadership and with the Miskito people. Their reception was, Contreras recalled, astounding. Word had passed through the towns and villages that Manuel, the leader of the Indians of the world, was passing

through, and people began to line the roads to catch a glimpse of him and wave. When Contreras realized that the fanfare was in their honour, he asked why they were coming out to see Manuel. The answer was simple. “When Somoza comes, he comes to visit Nicaraguans. But George Manuel is our President. We are lndigenous.”[12] Manuel and Contreras weren’t the only ones impressed by the sudden and unexpected outpouring of affection from the people. As the tour through the jungle villages began to draw crowds of up to eight hundred people, they suddenly found themselves escorted by the local army officers who attended every one of Manuel’s planned and impromptu speeches.

Contreras remembered being surprised that Manuel was so friendly with the military men, and particularly amazed when he would give Somoza’s guardsmen his address and suggest that they come up to visit him in Canada. When Contreras asked why Manuel was doing this, the WCIP leader explained that if he invited them, they would believe he was not a threat. And anyway, they would never get to Canada. The strategy seemed to work because the army officers were suddenly eager to please their future host in Canada by giving him a little space for private discussions.

His message to the people was the same one he had been giving in Canada for so many years: *Organize and unify around a clear set of objectives. Battle against all the forces of assimilation and try to build your nations economically, culturally and politically. Consult the people, politicize the people and never get too far ahead of them because, when all is said and done, they are your masters.*

During these meetings, one expectation he frequently had to dash was that Manuel, from a rich country like Canada, was about to shower them with development wealth. He had to explain time and again that the Indians of Canada were not rich and that the people would have to rely on their own means. He could offer them leadership and international solidarity, but he could not solve their need for a new well or new housing. That was part of their own struggle for political, social and economic independence.

The informal discussions and formal meetings were beginning to take a toll on Manuel’s health, and his exhaustion was worsened by the stifling Nicaraguan heat. In Mexico and Guatemala, they had been in the mountains, but in Nicaragua they were in the middle of the steamy jungle, and he was finding the heat almost unbearable.

Contreras remembers that Manuel began to wish the people would let

him rest, but they wouldn't. They would come to the room or trailer where he was staying at eight in the morning and drag him off to a meeting where he would encourage them to keep up the fight for their rights. Then they would take him off to another village, and another, all day long until ten, eleven or even twelve o'clock at night. The next morning, they would be back for another round of meetings and assemblies with their president.

When Manuel and Contreras finally left Nicaragua, they were exhausted, but both had been inspired by the solidarity they had witnessed and the vitality of the people. For Manuel it reinforced his hope for a viable World Council that could link the struggle of the Shuswap Indian in the interior Rockies, to the Miskito Indian along the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua, to the Indigenous peoples of Eurasia and northern Europe.

The final working stop on the tour was Panama where they met with Julio Dixon, the twenty-seven-year-old secretary general of the National Association of Indigenous Peoples of Panama. Dixon had also been a WCIP delegate for his Guaymi people at Port Alberni and had been elected as the Central American representative. George Manuel had been so impressed with his leadership potential that he had invited him back to Canada after the Port Alberni meeting to discuss the problem of government infiltration of Indigenous organizations. From his experience in Latin America, Dixon told Manuel this was an unavoidable evil, and he suggested that he wouldn't be surprised if among the delegates at the Port Alberni conference there were people reporting back to their governments.

During Manuel's visit to Panama, the main item on the agenda was the regional WCIP conference that was to be held in Panama the following year. Manuel had been promoting the conference during his travels through Mexico and Central America. He saw it as almost equal in importance to the Port Alberni meeting because the region, with its large Indigenous population, would eventually form the heart of the WCIP.

Along with his meetings with Dixon, Manuel managed a few forays into the countryside to the Guaymi communities. But Contreras remembers he was near the end of his rope. The heat in Panama was just as oppressive as it had been in Nicaragua, and he often found Manuel in his hotel room with his face close to the air conditioner "like he was listening to a radio."

At the end of the long sojourn, they took a quick trip to Ecuador, Contreras's home country. Manuel stayed in a hotel in Quito while Contreras visited his family. Manuel used the time to take a look at Indian life in the

capital. He was appalled when he saw Indians being used as pack animals to carry huge piles of merchandise on their backs.

"That, for him, is something that could be denounced," Contreras remembered, "and he certainly did."

But on the plane back to Canada, Manuel was in an upbeat mood. He had met dozens of local and national leaders and spoke to literally thousands of Central American Indians about their common struggle. Along the way, he had gained valuable insights about the Native cultures to the south and about the machinery of repression that was used against them. He also discovered that people at the village level were ready to assume the burdens of fighting back. All they needed was leadership.

For the past several years, Manuel had been trying to provide that leadership at the international level, while at the same time leading the national movement in Canada and trying to keep the shaky coalition together in British Columbia. Even before his trip south, he knew he was spreading himself too thin and he had decided that something had to give.

No one knows exactly when Manuel decided not to run for a fourth term as the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) president. But by the summer of 1976, he was already deeply committed to both the international struggle and to rebuilding the movement in British Columbia.

Around this time, he received some help in his decision to return to British Columbia from Phillip Paul. Paul was worried about the future of the Union and had decided that the only person who could pull things together was Manuel. To lure him back, Paul drew up plans for a commission that would travel through the province discussing Aboriginal rights and the British Columbia land question. It was, Paul knew, a job tailor-made for Manuel's return. He would be able to spend his time at the community level, talking with the Elders and the ordinary people about what they understood about Aboriginal rights and Aboriginal title, learning and politicizing as he went along.

As Paul suspected, Manuel was immediately interested in the commission idea. Along with putting him back in contact with the people and allowing him to lay the groundwork for a new popular front, the commission would parallel the Berger Commission in the north, which was then holding hearings on the Mackenzie Valley pipeline.

Manuel had already made two appearances in front of the Berger commission, and he was impressed by how the Dene were coming forward

to explain their hopes for the future and their fears about a project that could damage their lives and livelihood. He also appreciated the wide press coverage that gave the general public an education about Indian life and their sense of nationhood.

At Manuel's first appearance in front of the Berger commission in April 1976, he began by welcoming the opportunity to speak and added that "For once, the voice of Indian people is being heard before a final ruling on a major project is made." In his testimony, he reiterated the need for government recognition of Aboriginal rights. He emphasized that

> the solution to our land claims is not money. If the answer to Indian land claims and Aboriginal rights was merely money, the conflict could be resolved with a minimal degree of haggling. Indians across the country would simply pry as much cash out of the federal coffers as they could, and the federal government would sigh with relief as it washed its hands of Canada's original people.

Once again, Manuel used the James Bay Agreement as an example of what Native peoples did not want. His message was directed to the northern natives as much as it was to his own friend and former Native Brotherhood lawyer, Tom Berger.

"The catastrophic clauses of the James Bay Agreement are those sections which surrender title to the land," he said. "In the case of James Bay, then, the opportunity has been lost for a new relationship to be established between the Indian people and Canadian society as a whole." That new relationship would be based on "neither apartheid nor assimilation but participation—participation on terms that will recognize our national identity and will ultimately strengthen Canada as a whole." For a more concrete model of that new relationship, Manuel referred to the Dene Declaration as summing up what he meant by sovereignty and independence within Canada.[13]

Manuel's second appearance before the Berger Inquiry, in early June 1976, was one of his last major speeches before his retirement from the NIB, and it was one of best. He began by scoffing at the public relations line put out by the oil companies that the pipeline would be as unobtrusive as a piece of string across a football field.

> If such an analogy is valid, then it can be further said that Aboriginal Rights of Indian people are like the football that is being kicked around by the same oil companies and certain politicians. Perhaps we Indians need to pick up the ball and simply go home. Then the Almighty Oil Companies would have to shut down the football field and the piece of string would rot away or be blown by the winds to places unknown.

Manuel then returned, once again, to the James Bay Agreement when he pointed out that the Appeals Court set aside the Malouf decision on the basis of the "balance of convenience," which was a way of saying,

> the rights of six million white Quebecois are more important that the rights of eight thousand Cree and Inuit.
>
> Extending that argument to its logical conclusion on a global basis means, for example, that the rights of eight hundred and forty million Chinese are more important than the rights of twenty-two million white Canadians.
>
> And since we are always told that we Indians are really descendants of Asian forebears, maybe we should now ask our Asian brothers to come over in hordes to help us get our land back on the basis of 'balance of convenience.'

Manuel went on to describe Aboriginal rights as a moral issue

> because it strikes at the very roots of the religious foundation of the Christian society that Canada purports to be.
>
> As we understand Christianity, it is based on the ten commandments of God. The seventh and tenth commandments state: THOU SHALT NOT STEAL and THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S GOODS. We seriously wonder whether these commandments have been amended to read:
>
> 7. THOU SHALT NOT STEAL. (Except in Canada where lands of Aboriginal people can be taken at will without compensation.) And,
>
> 10. THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S GOODS. (Except in Canada where the riches of the land of the Aboriginal people can be taken for sheer profit.)
>
> We hope the Canadian people will live according to their own Christian laws which state 'THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THY SELF.'

He ended his speech with a warning.

> If Canada cannot or will not live up to its historical, legal, political and moral duties to its Aboriginal inhabitants, then this country will stand naked before the world. Canada will become renowned for its historical blindness, its legal squalors, its political cupidity, and its moral emptiness.[14]

When Berger released his report the following year, he agreed that the pipeline should not go ahead before the land claim was addressed. This victory in the north did not make up for the loss of Aboriginal title in Quebec, but it did serve to stall the government's drive for a James Bay-style extinguishment of Aboriginal rights in other parts of the country.

To capitalize on the success of the Berger hearings, the NIB's September 1976 Annual General Assembly was to be held in Yellowknife. It

was there that Manuel would formally give up the NIB presidency that he had held for over six years.

When he returned to Ottawa in early September, he was busy trying to arrange his family's move to British Columbia, and he also had to find a new home for the WCIP. Marie Marule had decided to leave the NIB when Manuel's term was up and had taken a teaching position at the University of Lethbridge. Since she was still the head of the WCIP Secretariat, it was decided that the head office of the WCIP would move west with her, into space provided by the university.

For his part, Manuel was still ready to take on the world through the WCIP and, in many ways, the more difficult and fractious world of Indian politics in British Columbia.

Chapter 16: Back to British Columbia, 1976–1977

> Agreement with the government will only come after a show of power.
>
> George Manuel on his return to British Columbia, 1977

George Manuel once wrote that "the kinds of giving are as many and as varied as the gifts and the givers," but the most difficult person to satisfy is the person "who gives to you because the gift for which he hopes in return is his own identity. It is unlikely that you can give to him what he is seeking. And there is a great temptation to give him your own identity instead."

Exactly what was meant by giving "your own identity" he explained this way:

> I was in that position myself when I first came to Ottawa. If cabinet ministers had been willing to meet with me then, I would have been ripe for being absorbed into their high-powered methods. It is so easy to allow a person whose status and power you admire to impose his style and values, whether or not that is his intention.[1]

It was one of Manuel's personal accomplishments that in his six years in Ottawa, with the occasional lunch at 24 Sussex, his frequent meetings with cabinet ministers and the highest bureaucrats in the land and his meetings with world leaders, he never forgot who he was or who he was representing: the 300,000 reserve Indians of the fifty-two First Nations who depended on him to fight for their rights.

Even in the matter of setting his own salary at the NIB, Manuel's integrity was beyond reproach. The first year he earned only $18,000 for his sixty-to-eighty hour-a-week job—no more than he would have been making as a boom man on the river. He put his heart (quite literally) and soul into the job for six years, and he never gave himself a raise.

At the same time, he refused the blandishments from outside. By 1976 he had been offered safe seats in Parliament by all three political parties. At any time after that, he could have taken the route of other Native leaders like James Gladstone, Len Marchand, Guy Williams, Charlie Watt, and Walter Twin who were rewarded for their work within the system with the prize of a senate appointment.

Instead, at the age of fifty-five Manuel was heading back to British

Columbia to build his peoples' movement. Ottawa had not absorbed him; it had radicalized him by showing him that reasoned argument and a just cause did not lead to government action. Governments, by their nature, only responded to a show of power, and the only power Indian Nations had at their disposal was that generated by the commitment and drive of their people. So he would build a movement to harness that energy and, if need be, he would lead that movement to the steps of Parliament.

Although his mind had been made up months before, Manuel waited until mid-August to announce formally that he was resigning from the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB). He made the announcement when speaking to a meeting of the Union of Ontario Indians in Toronto and musing about his recent travels to Central and South America. He was still filled with the emotion of the trip, and at one point he remarked that the Indians of the region were there before Columbus, "and I told them they should have eaten him. Latin America is as bad as Rhodesia."[2]

When he announced his decision to leave the NIB, he passed over it quickly by simply stating he would not be running for the presidency at the NIB's upcoming assembly in Whitehorse. In looking back over his three terms, he mentioned only that when he took over the NIB, it was in debt and the phones were disconnected. His contribution to the organization was that, six years later, the NIB was in the black and the phones were working.[3] That was, of course, an extreme understatement. When Manuel took over, the NIB was still a paper organization. It had no legitimacy in the eyes of the government and no public profile beyond the handful of Indian leaders who had signed the initial protocol. After six years of Manuel's leadership, it was the largest lobbying organization in Ottawa with institutionalized access to cabinet and a reputation for hard but honest bargaining on behalf of the First Nations.

During those six years, the NIB had made significant progress on all fronts—political, social and economic—and the Indian organizations, from the national to the band level, gained a new self-confidence that would allow them to pursue the struggle on a level never seen before. And it was Manuel's unique combination of vision and political savvy that had launched them on their way.

As the mid-September Whitehorse Assembly approached, Manuel and Marlene were preoccupied with their move to Burnaby where they had rented a small apartment. But when Manuel flew to Whitehorse to make his

low-key farewell, he found that his resignation had not been so easily accepted. At every turn he found old friends and colleagues urging him to reconsider and run one more time. In 1976, just as in 1970, 1972 and 1974, there was no Indian leader in Canada who could have defeated him. In fact, if he had changed his mind and run, it is unlikely that anyone would even have stood against him.

But Manuel refused to listen to the One More Timers. In his opening address to the assembly he made a point of thanking those who were encouraging him to run, but insisted he wanted "to return to British Columbia and work with the people there."[4] Only when it was certain that he was out did the campaigning for his replacement begin in earnest. It was assumed that the powerful prairie leaders Dave Courchene and David Ahenikew would throw their hats in the ring and that Ray Jackson of the Yukon would be the third man in the race. But after a fierce round of back room bargaining in the hotel suites, Ahenikew stood up in the Assembly and nominated the young director of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians Treaty research department, Noel Starblanket, as Manuel's replacement.

Ironically, Starblanket, a twenty-nine-year-old Cree, had been working at the NIB office in Winnipeg when Manuel took over from Walter Dieter in 1970, but because of the NIB's debt, Manuel had been forced to lay him off. Since that time, Starblanket had occasionally criticized Manuel because he believed the NIB president was too pre-occupied with Aboriginal rights to the detriment of the Treaty Rights of the prairie Indians.

In his acceptance speech, Starblanket acknowledged that he had been one of Manuel's critics in the past, but he thanked Manuel for the groundwork he had laid at the NIB and said it was work Manuel "could be proud of."[5]

For most of those who had been involved with Manuel and the NIB over the previous six years, there was still a reluctance to let go. Manuel found himself back in Ottawa for numerous tributes in his honour, including a "celebrity roast" put on by the Ontario Native Women's Association. Bill Badcock was one of the MCs, and most of Manuel's old friends were there to trundle out the Manuel stories, including a few that suggested that part of Manuel's motivations for international travel was an excuse for a little "extra-marital hanky panky." As an *Indian News* report pointed out, Marlene seemed a bit uncomfortable by the tone and the content of some of the jokes, but when it came her turn at the microphone she stood up and told how she

first met Manuel standing in the hall of Joey's house "buck-naked" and holding a bottle of whisky. It is likely, though, that despite Marlene's quick recovery, Manuel had a few pointed questions to answer about his travels when he got home. He later admitted to Phillip Paul that while the roast was going on, he was praying a hole would open up in the floor so he could crawl into it.[6]

Less threatening was an evening in his honour put on by the Native Council of Canada (NCC). Harry Daniels, the NCC leader, was a good friend who had recently travelled with Manuel on a brief tour of Scandinavia. Daniels presented Manuel with a Métis sash and flag for his cooperation with the NCC and the Métis people. It was a honour Manuel valued since he had great respect for Daniels and the Métis and non-Status people he represented.

When the retirement accolades were finally over and Manuel had said his goodbyes to his friends in Ottawa, he headed back to British Columbia where the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs organizers were still trying to patch the organization together after Chilliwack.

They had had some initial success. After their election to the three-person executive, Bob Manuel and Steve Point managed to have the Union office moved out of Bill Wilson's apartment to Coqualeetza, near Point's community, in the hope they could block any further attempt by Wilson to take control.

But while Point and Bob Manuel's strategy was to try to isolate Wilson, Wilson ignored the new executive members and carried on with his plans to amalgamate the Union and the British Columbia Association of Non-Status Indians (BCANSI). This became apparent when Wilson organized a Union assembly in Courtenay for May 1976 without consulting either Bob Manuel or Point. According to some observers, Wilson hoped to recreate the atmosphere of Chilliwack, but this time with the delegates cheering not for the rejection of funds, but for the immediate merger of British Columbia's Status and non-Status Indian organizations.

To make sure he was in control of the conference, Wilson appointed his sister as coordinator and ran the publicity out of his own office. Bob Manuel and Point were left to watch from the sidelines.

A few days before the conference, Bob Manuel received a phone call from a friend who said he had heard that the Union of Indian Chiefs had rented his P.A. system for the Courtenay conference, but that nobody had put

it on paper or agreed to his price, and he didn't know whether he should send his equipment to Courtenay or not.

Bob Manuel could only tell him that Wilson was looking after it. He then called Point and told him about the organizational problems surrounding the Courtenay conference and they agreed they should get together to discuss what they could do to fix things. Bob Manuel hopped in his car and headed south to Coqualeetza, but halfway down the canyon he began to chuckle to himself. So what if Wilson was messing things up? He had gone out on his own with the Courtenay conference and any failure would be laid at his feet.

When he reached Coqualeetza, he told Point that the best thing they could do was distance themselves from the conference and let everyone know they had nothing to do with it before it started. If Wilson faltered, they would move in and take the meeting over.[7] The plan worked. Wilson could muster no enthusiasm among the Union of Indian Chiefs members for the merger with BCANSI. At the point where some of the delegates were beginning to drift away, Bob Manuel and Point walked up to the front and started conducting Union business as if Wilson had never been there. It was a major political defeat for Wilson. But the rejection of the merger also hurt a number of BCANSI activists on a personal level. Once again, they felt their Status Indian brothers were slamming the door in their face.

Wilson's response was to withdraw from the B.C. Union of Indian Chiefs executive and, eventually, from the union altogether. Phillip Paul, who had been working with Bob Manuel and Point behind the scenes, put himself forward as Wilson's replacement and was re-elected to the open spot on the executive.

The return of Paul was a signal that the turbulence precipitated by the Chilliwack conference had finally run its course. But the funding issue continued to be a cause of difficulties throughout the province. Most bands had quietly begun re-applying for government grants shortly after Chilliwack, and the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA), pleased with the break in the solidarity of the British Columbia Indians, was only too happy to find itself in a position of making separate deals with a hundred or so isolated Chiefs.

By early 1977, the Union was forced to admit that "the motion to reject funding had not been a success and the blame for that failure can only be placed upon our shoulders."[8] The hangover after the Chilliwack excesses

that had been dragging the Union down for more than a year was beginning to lift; it was time to begin rebuilding the British Columbia Union of Indian Chiefs.

* * *

When George Manuel returned to British Columbia in the fall of 1976, he assumed he would be heading the Aboriginal Rights Commission that Paul had said he was setting up. But after Chilliwack, the Union had no money to pay for the commission, so Manuel contacted his former colleagues in the Native Brotherhood to see if they might be interested in making the commission a joint venture. The Brotherhood, which was still angling for the Union's lost government funding, refused.

While Manuel was looking around for a funding source, Paul approached him about taking over the leadership of the Union. George's first reaction was to ask Paul about what happened to the commission. Paul said something to the effect that in bringing Manuel back to British Columbia, the commission "had already served its purpose."

Manuel, who had done his share of people manipulation for the cause, smiled and said, "Phillip, you're a son-of-a-bitch."[9] Then he went to consult friends like Doug Sanders about whether or not he should take the job. Sanders knew Manuel well enough to know he would never turn down such an offer. He merely pointed out the irony of Manuel finding himself back in the same position he had been in at the beginning of the 1970s—taking over a barely functioning organization that was deeply in debt.

When Manuel told Paul he would take the job, he did so with one condition. The three-person executive, he said, had turned the Union into a three-headed monster, with the heads spending more time plotting against each other than looking after day-to-day business. So he told Paul and the executive he would run only if the constitution was changed to allow for a single presidency.

Paul and the others agreed to the changes and called a special assembly in Prince George to hold an election for the new post of Union president. When word went out that Manuel was back and running for the presidency, the Union was given an immediate shot of adrenaline as activists who had drifted away after the Chilliwack fiasco suddenly remobilized themselves. The news was greeted with less enthusiasm, however, by those who were planning to build a new organization to compete with the Union.

As the Prince George conference approached, there were rumours of a large number of bands planning to pull out of the Union under the banner of the Native Brotherhood and a breakaway organization called the Alliance of BC Indians. When the delegates arrived in Prince George, they heard that a major show of force was in the works with the dissidents preparing to stand up and march out of the conference hall.

But the show of force never materialized. Most of the bands that were supposed to leave remained in the hall to listen to Manuel's speech after he was elected. And even the few delegates who walked out returned to sit as "observers" until the conference was over. By the end of the conference, it was clear that Manuel was already in control of a newly focused Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs.

Along with the post of presidency, the new Union constitution provided for four regional vice presidents, with Archie Patrick representing the northern region, Ray Jones representing the coast, Don Moses representing the central interior and Phillip Paul representing the southwest.

At a later executive council meeting in Kamloops, Manuel invited the two former executive council members, Steve Point and his son Bob, for a debriefing. After they had filled the new team in on what they had been doing over the past year, the two young leaders were ready to head home, content in the knowledge that they had provided a transition for the Union from the Chilliwack breakdown to Manuel's return.

The new Union president, however, saw a continuing role for the two, and created quasi-cabinet posts for them with Bob looking after the Indian Act, Indian government and youth issues and Point taking over the fisheries portfolio. The vice presidents were also given portfolios with Paul looking after education, Moses economic development and Jones social development.

For Bob, it meant that politics would be a full-time occupation. A few months earlier, in January 1977, he had been elected as the Neskonlith band Chief, which had given him a political base of his own. In the ensuing years he would play a major role within the Union and build a national reputation that would eventually bring him to the verge of the NIB presidency.

At the time, George Manuel's most immediate concern was to rebuild the organization. His first priorities were the same as when he was building the NIB: putting together a team and acquiring funding. In the wake of the Prince George conference, the Union opened offices on Hastings Street in

Vancouver, and Manuel began to work his Ottawa contacts to have the Union's core and project funding restored. He used all of his skills at playing "the establishment Indian" with the Ottawa bureaucrats to get the money flowing again, and in a short time he had the Union's budget back to and beyond the 1975 level.

As the funding came in, Manuel was already working on what he called his peoples' movement. Most of the staff he hired during this period were young activists, and a number came from outside of British Columbia. One of the first hired was Millie Poplar, who was the daughter of Clara Tiyza, the representative from the Yukon on the National Advisory Board in the 1960s. Poplar was given the job of special assistant to the president and would work closely with Manuel until the end of his life.

Manuel later hired Clara's other daughter, Rosalee Tiyza, as the education coordinator and as his administrator, and she became a valued advisor who performed many of the same tasks Marie Marule had performed at the NIB. Manuel then hired Raymond Good, a coastal Salish activist, as his administrative assistant, and brought in Mary Lou Andrew as the specific research and legal coordinator.

Andrew put together her own team of young researchers. One of them recalls that the Union was an exciting place to be in those days, with young men and women with little formal training coming in and being put to work. Because of his national and international reputation, most of them saw Manuel as a larger-than-life figure, to the point where some of the young Union workers began calling themselves "Manuelistas." The high esteem in which the young workers held Manuel added a sense of enthusiasm and self-sacrifice to the cause that would soon give the Union an impact on the national scene that far exceeded its numbers.

Manuel was also able to make full use of his staff funding by laying off his workers when they had enough insurable weeks in the unemployment system and letting the government pay them while they continued their Union work until their benefit period ran out. Then he would hire them back and go through the rotation again. The wages, however, were never high. He paid himself and his vice presidents the same wage, $18,000 a year, and during his tenure no one received a raise.

To round out his team, Manuel brought in two non-Indian lawyers, Leslie Pinder and Louise Mandell. The latter, in fact, came to him. She was in her early twenties and just starting out in criminal and family law when

she took a vacation to the Grand Canyon and had some sort of quasi-spiritual experience that caused her to quit her job. She was back in Vancouver and unemployed when she met a friend of hers, Art Pape, who was doing some contract work for the Union. He suggested that she see Manuel about working for the Union.* A meeting was set up in a coffee shop, and Mandell watched with interest as the large brown man limped in. She knew nothing about Aboriginal rights or the Indian world, but she was instantly impressed with Manuel. For his part, George showed "a real human curiosity" about who she was.

Others had described Mandell as "a hippy lawyer" and this could account for Manuel's curiosity. He often spoke of the counterculture movement with a mixture of admiration and suspicion—admiration because they were eschewing the materialistic values of their parents, but suspicion that they were playing at poverty until they got bored with it and moved on to the lucrative careers that were reserved for people of their class. In Mandell's case, he must have decided that she was the real article because he hired her as a lawyer and researcher for the Union.

Mandell was involved in the first concrete battle the Union pursued under Manuel's leadership. At the time, the government was holding environmental hearings over a proposed oil terminal on the west coast. Two oil companies were competing for the right to build it and Indian fishermen were opposing it because of the effects an oil spill would have on their livelihood.

The Union took up the fishermen's cause, and Manuel instructed Mandell to take a close look at the two competing bids for the terminal. She did, and she found that the two companies had sharply criticized each other's proposals on environmental grounds. Manuel then suggested that she take those parts of the competing briefs and present it as the Union's case. She went to the hearings and argued that both the companies were right, the two proposals were dangerous to the environment. The government agreed and shelved the project, and the Union had their first legal victory under Manuel's stewardship.[10] His preoccupation during this time, however, was broadening the base of support for the Union and promoting the battle for Aboriginal rights among the grassroots. He travelled the province relentlessly, visiting communities and people he had met twenty years earlier in his National Association of Indian Brotherhood (NAIB) days and speaking about the struggle for self-government and independence for Indian

people.

Once again those around him were impressed by his single-minded dedication to the cause. If his car broke down or he ran out of gas on the way to a meeting, he would simply abandon it and head out on foot or hitchhike to the meeting and return for the car later.

He also kept his staffers out in the field as much as possible. The land claims researchers were expected to begin their work by going onto the reserves and meeting with the Elders to find out what they remembered of the land use in their childhood and from their parents' and grandparents' stories. The researchers were billeted out in the community and given a taste of how the people lived. One research assistant, Winona Stevenson, remembers that she spent her nights sleeping four to a bed with the three young girls of the host family while she was working in one of the northern communities.

When the researchers brought the information back to the office in Vancouver, they began their archival work with the oral histories as a guide. When there were contradictions between the archives and the oral history, it was assumed the archives were wrong until proven otherwise.

As the Union grew, Manuel also set up a resource centre and in-house clipping service and hired Beth Cuthand as his communication coordinator. One of the primary jobs of the communications branch was to put out the newsletter and publicize local and provincial meetings that began to grow in size and frequency until some assemblies drew crowds of more than three thousand people.

The gatherings always had a strong cultural component, and many of them had the same energy that had driven the Chilliwack conference into the premature rejection of funds. But this time the leadership was there to focus the radicalism toward realizable goals at the local and provincial level.

The huge gatherings also served as a warning to the governments in Ottawa and Victoria that Indian power in British Columbia was a reality that, sooner or later, they would have to deal with. As Manuel explained to his workers, "politics is a public act." The Native movement would only succeed if it clearly articulated its goals, then showed the government that the people were willing to back up their demands in the streets.[11]

George Manuel at Vancouver International Airport meeting a group of Indigenous Ainu people from Japan, 1977.

According to some who were close to Manuel, there was a notable exception to his practice of “public” politics. He and Paul were planning to use civil disobedience as part of their peoples’ power campaign, and they feared the movement might face the same type of government repression that had made Indian organizing illegal in Canada from 1927 to 1951. To protect the movement, they began setting up a parallel underground organization, with separate cells at the community level so the Union could be kept alive and functioning even if it was declared illegal.

Manuel even went so far as to invite an Irish Republican Army (IRA) leader to the Union office for private discussions on the politics of the underground.[12] Eventually, Manuel’s underground organization would be tapped, but for a different purpose: marching on Ottawa to fight the Liberal

government's constitutional changes. But rumours of the organization led to the belief among the radical wing of the movement that Manuel was a modern War Chief who was ready, if necessary, to lead his people into battle.

While Manuel was busy building his peoples' movement, he did not neglect his commitment to the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP). In fact, with his release from the burdens of national leadership and the endless cross-country travelling, he was able to devote more time to the WCIP.

One pressing problem that had to be addressed by the WCIP during this period was the fate of Constantino Lima, a Bolivian delegate at the Port Alberni conference who had been imprisoned when he returned to his homeland.

When Manuel and the rest of the Canadian organizers heard of the arrest, they arranged to have his three daughters flown to Canada. After a great deal of lobbying, Constantino was freed in May 1977 and given refuge in Canada with the rest of his family. Upon his arrival, Constantino's friends discovered that he had been tortured in prison. This information created a growing concern for WCIP contacts in other Latin American countries under the heel of right-wing dictatorships.

Manuel took the Bolivian with him when he travelled to Panama in February 1977 to attend the WCIP conference that would formally launch the Central American regional organization. At the end of the meeting, the Sámi delegation offered to host the next WCIP biennial assembly in Kiruna, Sweden the following October.

The theme would be "the situation of Indigenous peoples and international agreements relating to human rights and the protection of lands." In the lead-up, there was a sense of optimism that the new American president, Jimmy Carter, would provide an opening for pursuing the Indigenous rights issue with his promised campaign to promote human rights around the world. As Doug Sanders pointed out, the new interest in human rights in other peoples' backyards could only help the Fourth World movement, which depended on international recognition of their national status.

By the time the Kiruna conference opened, an unexpected issue arose that dominated the proceedings. The apartheid government of Rhodesia was in the process of collapsing and white Rhodesians were flooding into countries like Chile where right-wing dictators were in power. Other Western

countries, like Canada and Australia, were also opening their doors to the white Rhodesians under the pretext that it would help relieve the pressures of the civil war.

A Chilean delegate brought the matter to the WCIP assembly by complaining that the "ex-African white fascist settlers" were bringing their white supremacist ideology with them into his country. An Australian Aborigine confirmed that the same thing was happening in his country, with some Rhodesians showing up as government agents overseeing reserves in Queensland.[13] Manuel picked up the issue, receiving wide coverage in Canada when he condemned his government for giving the Rhodesians special immigration status. He called on the government to set an example by treating the Rhodesians as "common criminals." Manuel also blasted the U.S. for refusing to offer funds to the American chapter of the WCIP. He pointed out that American agencies had promised $92,000 for the founding meeting of the WCIP but had later backed out and refused to consider any more funding requests. The reason for this sudden blanket rejection, Manuel suggested, was that the American government had "a major interest in what happens in Central and South America" and was trying to block the WCIP from organizing in the region.[14]

The lack of funding meant that many of the American delegates had to stay at home, as did more than two dozen other delegations who couldn't afford to make the trip. Still, the thirty-eight delegations that were present passed a resolution urging the U.N. to take a lead in trying to stop "all violent actions and measures against Indigenous peoples." The U.N. was also asked "to recognize that Indigenous peoples are nations and not tribes," and that "Aboriginal land rights never can be "extinguished." The delegates also condemned government policies of assimilation and demanded that Indigenous peoples have the right to define who they are.

There was an interesting confrontation at the conference when a "United Nations representative from Mexico told the delegates that it must "be good to live in Canada where there is no war and violence." Harry Daniels challenged the remark by saying that "the Native people of Canada represent three percent of the general population and yet fifty percent of the jail population. I do not call this a country," Daniels concluded, "without war and violence."[15]

The Latin Americans then joined in and lambasted the Mexican government for refusing to recognize the Indians as a distinct people in

Mexico. The attack widened when Constantino Lima stood up and charged that all Latin American governments were oppressing the Indigenous peoples. In the aftermath of the conference, Manuel received quite a bit of personal press when a CP reporter did a couple of profile pieces on him. As the reporter saw it, “George Manuel had a bagful of excuses to sit out his life in self-pity and let the state support him. Instead, he set off with a crippled hip and a grade-two education to become one of the world’s most respected and influential Native leaders.”

The reporter asked Manuel about rumours that he had originally returned to British Columbia to run for Parliament. Manuel admitted that he had been approached by all three parties but said that “It’s meaningless to be an Indian MP in terms of helping Indian people.” What the Indian peoples needed was to gather their own source of political power within their own communities and organizations because the “Canadian government will deal with you according to how much political power you have.”[16]

Manuel’s own stature in the movement increased further when he returned to Canada and it was leaked that the International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs had nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in launching and leading the WCIP. The 1977 nomination turned out to be the first of three, as he was re-nominated in 1978 and 1979. Winning was always a long shot, however. In 1977, the award went to Amnesty International, in 1978 it went to Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin and the 1979 winner was the international Catholic crowd-pleaser, Mother Teresa. Still, simply being nominated added to Manuel’s aura of political invincibility. And it was around this time that some of his colleagues in the movement nicknamed him “Shogun” after the Japanese warlord whose genius for political plotting won him the leadership of the empire in James Clavell’s novel of the same name.[17]

At the same time, Manuel’s personal life became the subject of speculation. Rumours began to circulate that the jokes at the celebrity roast about his “extra-marital hanky panky” had been based in fact, and it was noted that when he came back from the WCIP assembly in Kiruna Manuel was followed by Maria Sofe, a small Sámi woman dressed in traditional Sámi costume, complete with the turned-up shoes.

She remained his travelling companion in Canada for some time before she returned home, carrying Manuel’s tenth child. The boy was born in Sweden and named Ara Manuel. George accepted his fatherhood and the

affair was a serious but, as it turned out, not fatal strain on his marriage to Marlene. And Ara has been embraced as a brother by the entire Manuel family.

---

* Art Pape was a non-Native married to Maxine Pape, a Union staffer.

Chapter 17: The Peoples' Movement, 1977–1979

> We will no longer live on our knees…
>
> George Manuel, president's address, 1978

When George Manuel arrived in Duncan as a community development worker in the mid-1960s, he used the housing issue to rouse the community into collective action. In his first two years at the NIB, Indian control over education had been used to the same effect. In British Columbia in 1977–78, the lightning rod was Indian fishing rights.

Fishing became a major concern during the summer of 1977 when British Columbia Indians were systematically harassed by provincial agents who raided their fishing grounds with tracking dogs and a back-up force of RCMP officers. Louise Mandell was kept busy in the courts. During the winter of 1977–78 she handled no less than sixty-four Indian fishing cases and, to the great chagrin of the fishery agents, won every single one of them.

Despite Mandell and the Union's success in court, the fact that the province was stepping up patrols of the rivers gave rise to suspicions that something was afoot. These suspicions were confirmed when the provincial government announced that it was going to replace the old Indian Fishing Permit with an Indian Food Fishing Licence.

At the time, Indians were allowed to catch as many salmon as they wanted, but they had to clip the nose and the dorsal fin as soon as they were caught. Fish marked in this way were then ineligible for sale. This implicit prohibition against Indians selling their fish would be made explicit with the new Indian Food Fishing License.

More important, the introduction of the new license allowed Fish and Game officers to challenge someone with a large quantity of fish, whether they were clipped or not, and demand that they prove the fish were for their own consumption. Once fishery agents began questioning the number of fish in an individual's possession, it would be a simple step to introduce quotas for the Indian fishery.

The fishery issue was one that both touched the British Columbia Indian people at the gut level and fit into Manuel's overall self-government drive.

At the time, he and the new Union executive were working on a twenty-four-point Aboriginal Rights Position Paper that outlined self-government powers for the First Nations in a wide range of areas.

The Position Paper was an expanded and much more detailed version of Manuel's national Indian philosophy. The document supplied the movement with a detailed political manifesto that spelled out the foundations of Indian government by outlining the "twenty-four separate rights that had been usurped by the federal or provincial governments" and that had to be recaptured by the Indian nations. It was by far the most sophisticated and radical document of its kind ever put together by the Indian movement, and it would eventually be adopted at the national level by the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) as the basic self-government strategy for the First Nations.

On the fishery, the position paper stated that Indians had to recoup exclusive jurisdiction of "all fish resources contained with the waterways that are established as being associated with our Indian Reserve Lands."[1] The key words here were "associated with." Manuel's plan called for absolute control over both the conservation and the possible commercialization of the salmon fishery in broad areas of the British Columbia interior. If the Union won on this front, it would set an important precedent for winning the other twenty-four items of the self-government blueprint.

Manuel's first move on the fishery was to organize a province-wide Fish Forum in Vancouver in December 1977. The conference was attended by a hundred delegates from the Union and the Native Brotherhood, and Manuel opened the meeting by throwing out a challenge. "It is you," he told the delegates, "who are going to decide if fishing is a problem and, if it is a crisis, what we are going to do about it?"[2]

During the conference, the Union leader signalled how important he considered the issue by debating Wally Johnstone, a federal representative. After Johnstone's vague opening remarks, Manuel said he was "appalled at how unprepared you are in coming to this meeting," and he accused the fishery officers of incompetence. British Columbia Indians, he said, were "victims of oppressive laws" and were insulted by the nose and fin clipping regulations, which they saw as an attack on their integrity."[3] Johnstone sputtered something about not all Indians being perfect either, and then

pleaded, “But for God’s sake, give me a chance.”[4]

But Manuel was not willing to give Johnstone, or any other government official, a chance. He had already set up a Legal Fish Committee headed by Mandell that was following Manuel’s two-pronged political and legal strategy, which involved playing as much to the court of public opinion as to the court of justice. To score public opinion points, the Committee focused on cases like that of Peter Dennis Peters, an Elder from the Hope Indian band, who was charged with fishing on a forbidden day. Under persistent cross examination in court, the old man broke down and wept, admitting that he had been fishing but only to get food for his daughter who had broken her leg and couldn’t work.

While a steady stream of similar stories of government harassment were being fed to the press, Mandell and her five researchers were busy preparing a legal defence that would be based on the British Columbia Indians’ Aboriginal rights to the land and waterways.

In preparing her case, Mandell went back to an 1881 Royal Commission that had granted British Columbia Indians the right to fish as a part of their basic “right to a way of life.”[5] It wasn’t long before she had an opportunity to test the defence. In July, eight members of the Lillooet band, including Manuel’s old friend Victor Adolph, openly defied the fishing regulations with an illegal “fish-in.” Fifty band members gathered to offer their support and there was a festive atmosphere until a force of twenty fisheries officers crashed the party.

When the officers moved in to make arrests, a shouting match began, then a scuffle broke out and both sides took their share of lumps.

The next day, Manuel reacted to what he saw as the fisheries officials’ attack on his people by announcing that Native violence “in the form of sophisticated civil disobedience” was a real possibility if the governments continued to deny basic Aboriginal rights.

When pressed by reporters, he explained that some of his people “have come to me, telling me that negotiations for the past hundred years have not got us anywhere . . . and are saying the only way to go is violence.” He admitted that he had been seriously thinking about the same thing.[6] The Union leader went even further the next day when he charged that the fisheries officials were using terrorist tactics and announced that Indians were prepared “to meet violence with violence.” In a reference to the underground organization he and Paul had set up, he warned that “An army

of British Columbia Indians is standing by to undergo weapons and combat training to defend and assert Native rights."[7] Manuel went on to describe a secret hide-out where the training would take place and said these foot soldiers of the movement would be sent to trouble spots across the province when they were needed.

The fiery rhetoric and his threat to meet violence with violence had a sobering effect on the fisheries officials who admitted that they were "very worried" by the remarks. But they also brought the Union a new enemy when the influential B.C. Wildlife Federation entered into the fray.

Manuel had been trying to win at least the Federation's neutrality on the Indian fishing issue for months. He had twice led Union delegations to the Wildlife Federation's meetings to argue that the British Columbia Indians and the Federation were natural allies in the battle to conserve the salmon stocks. He cited government figures that showed that of the 23.5 million salmon caught in British Columbia waters in the previous two years, the commercial fishery had taken twenty-two million, the sport fishermen one million and the Indians only five hundred thousand. It was the commercial fishery, along with industrial pollution of the spawning grounds and coastal waters, Manuel argued, that was killing off a resource the British Columbia Indians had husbanded for thousands of years.

After his threat of unleashing a sort of Indian militia on the province, the head of the B.C. Wildlife Federation broke off all dealings with Manuel and vowed to fight "the Indian rip-off of Canada's resources," no matter what kind of forces the Union was amassing.[8]

The negative effects of Manuel's rhetoric on the Wildlife Federation was offset, however, by the galvanizing effect it had on British Columbia Indian activists. After Manuel's announcement that he was prepared to meet force with force, Indians across the province began to defy the government regulations with a new wave of fish-ins, and wildlife officers were kept busy carting Indian men and women off to jail.

As the court dockets began to overflow, Crown lawyers approached the Union with a deal to use the Lillooet case against Bradley Bob as a test case. The Crown would hold back on all the cases using the same defence as Bradley Bob until after his trial. If the Union won, all other charges would be dropped. If the Union lawyers lost, all of the Indians charged with illegal fishing were to plead guilty.

Manuel flatly rejected the offer and informed the prosecutor that no

matter what the outcome of the Bradley case, Indian men and women charged with illegal fishing would continue to seek every recourse through the courts. If that clogged up the justice system, too bad.[9] While the Crown prosecutors and the fisheries department watched in exasperation, Manuel continued to turn up the rhetorical flame. In September he described the fisheries department as: “Enemy Number One,” because the “Fisheries enforcement officers were treating my people in the same way the Germans treated the Jews in the Second World War.” He then accused department officials of trying to bypass the Union with attempts to make separate agreements with individual bands that would limit Indian fishing. He called on the bands to reject the department’s Nazi methods.[10]

Up to this point Manuel’s battle had been with the provincial government, and at the DIA headquarters in Vancouver officials were left scratching their heads at what they saw as his overkill on the issue. But the Union leader’s motives became clearer in the lead-up to the Union’s Annual General Assembly in Penticton in April 1978 when he began to tie the radicalism over the fishery issue to the larger battle for Indian government.

At a press conference in Vancouver, Manuel announced that British Columbia Indians wanted not only the restoration of their traditional fishing rights, but the control of their lands and resources, social programs, health care and justice system. To back up the claim, he once again contrasted Canada’s three hundred thousand Indians with the much smaller Prince Edward Island population and asked why the Indians were left with none of the powers and with half the financial resources of the tiny province.

To rectify this situation, the Union was designing a new Indian Act that would not begin by delegating powers to the Indian Nations but with Indian peoples deciding what powers they would transfer to the federal government, the provincial government and their own organizations. In other words, the Indian Nations’ inherent right to self-government, based on thousands of years of independence, would have to be the starting point of any negotiations with the Canadian government.[11]

By the time the Penticton Assembly began, the fishing rights dispute had been neatly melded into the overall fight for sovereignty, and the eight hundred delegates and supporters were kept busy in workshops exploring every available avenue in that larger struggle. One of the essential elements would be a demand for greatly expanded reserve lands to form self-supporting national communities. Manuel took the opportunity to once again

reject any thought of a cash-for-land settlement with the government, even "if it's a hundred billion dollars."[12]

In his address to the Assembly, he explained that

> The work that needs to be done for us to manage our Indian government is a monumental task. But I challenge you to keep pace with the job that we must do as Indian people.
>
> Self-determination has to be our goal in our quest to recover the lands, energy, resources and political authority that we have entrusted to the White political institutions. We are saying that for the past hundred years we gave you, the White government, the responsibility to manage our lands, energy, resources and our political authority. You have mismanaged that trust and responsibility. Now we are taking it back into our hands and we will manage our own resources through our Indian political institutions.

He then urged his people to continue the type of militancy they had shown in the fishing dispute in other areas as well. "I'm going to be a leader in this fight," he said, "and I hope that I will have your support and that in every band you will take the kind of action that is needed to protect and defend our rights."[13] Manuel then tabled the Union's twenty-four point Aboriginal Rights Position Paper and asked the delegates to take the document back to their communities, explain its provisions to the Elders and the rest of the people then listen for feedback. Like the 1960 brief to the Joint Parliamentary Committee, it was to serve as an organizing tool and a focal point of debate as well as a political blueprint for future action.

As it turned out, its introduction could not have been more timely. While the Aboriginal Rights Position Paper was being debated across the province, Prime Minister Trudeau launched his drive to patriate the Constitution in a way that would have incalculable effects on Indian rights.

* * *

Among the Indian leaders in Canada, Manuel had the best grasp of the constitutional issue and how central it was to the position of the First Nations. The Constitution had been a concern of his since his early days at the NIB when he demanded that Indian peoples "be given full opportunity to participate in all future federal-provincial deliberations on amending the constitution of Canada."[14]

But Trudeau's new constitutional offensive in 1978 made no reference to Aboriginal or Treaty Rights. His package, titled "A Time for Action," was focused on entrenching the two founding nations concept, referring to the English- and French-speaking peoples with a strong central government

"with real powers which apply to all parts of the country." In addition, Trudeau insisted that the package include a charter of rights and freedoms that would be binding on the federal and provincial governments. His timetable called for the new Constitution to be enacted by the end of 1981.[15]

The first thing Manuel had noticed when he looked at Trudeau's proposals was the most obvious—they contained nothing about Aboriginal rights. But he also quickly seized on the inclusion of a binding charter of rights. He remembered Doug Sanders's advice during the Lavell case that if the Bill of Rights had been judged to have more force than the Indian Act, the whole special status of Indian People, including their reserve lands and hunting and fishing rights, could be overturned by the courts. To get a second opinion, Manuel phoned Walter Rudnicki in Ottawa and asked him to prepare a brief on the possible effects of the Constitution on Indian Treaty and Aboriginal rights.

Rudnicki told Manuel he hadn't "even read the damn thing," but as soon as he got off the phone he went down to the government bookstore and picked up a copy. A few days later he sent a detailed opinion to the effect that "Aboriginal people were being totally excluded from any consideration within the constitution. No rights were being entrenched and nothing was being elaborated in terms of the existing section 124."[16]

Similar concerns were beginning to be felt at the NIB. Dave Monture was working for Noel Starblanket at the time, and he was shown a copy of the preamble to the Constitution with everything whited out except the reference to the Indigenous peoples. It consisted of one sentence that acknowledged their existence. That was all they were going to get out of the Trudeau proposal—a sentence in the preamble—while the rest of the document threatened to reduce dramatically their historic rights within Canada.

At the Union offices, there was a sense that Starblanket and the NIB hadn't understood the full impact the constitutional changes could have on Treaty and Aboriginal rights in Canada. Starblanket had surrounded himself with a young, generally well-educated Indian staff who had acted as competent administrators. But they lacked both the experience and the creativity needed to take on the federal government on an issue as fundamental as the Constitution.

Bob Manuel was the Union's liaison with the NIB at the time, and he remembers being unimpressed with Starblanket's leadership. He also

suspected that Starblanket and his people in Saskatchewan had played a role in ushering his father out of the NIB leadership, and he resented him for that. As the Union rep at the NIB, he had at first tried to make life difficult for Starblanket, but when he told his father about this, Manuel wasn't at all pleased.

"If you're doing that for me," he said, "it's totally wrong. I want you to support him one hundred per cent. I held that position and I know what it's like. We're the last ones who want to make trouble for him."[17] Manuel would, in fact, back Starblanket for a second term at the fall 1978 NIB Assembly in Fredericton—although he did it in such a way as to signal that he personally intended to continue to play a role on the national scene. Instead of sending the British Columbia delegates to deposit their ballots one-by-one, he made a show of collecting all of the ballots from the delegates and personally depositing them in the ballot box.

The gesture symbolized Manuel's continuing influence on the national scene, and this role would once again become a dominant one. By 1978, he was in a stronger position than Starblanket to carry out a national campaign against the Constitution. He had at his disposal seventy-five Union staffers, as opposed to the fifty-four who were working for the NIB in Ottawa. But more important, Manuel had the vision, the political intuitions and the ability to inspire the people at the grassroots level that Starblanket's NIB seemed to lack.

During the summer and fall of 1978, the NIB was pinning its hopes on the Trudeau package collapsing on its own, or at least with a little help from Canada's ten premiers. The premiers had met in Regina in August, describing the Trudeau proposals as "unworkable and a threat to Parliamentary democracy" and vowing to fight him every step of the way.[18] Manuel was skeptical about the premiers' hectoring, however.

He knew his way around Ottawa and the provincial capitals well enough to be aware of the kind of deals Trudeau could strike with the individual provinces to bring them on side. He had once suggested that Canadian confederation had been built on a hundred years of backroom deals, and he suspected Trudeau was capable of carrying on the tradition.[19]

So he continued to search for a legal or political way to fight the patriation drive from his home base. It was a battle he believed could be won only if the First Nations drew on the strength of their Indigenous cultures because for him the constitution fight was about two radically different

conceptions of the country. In a series of speeches, he urged the people to begin the fight for their liberation by rejecting the white man's values, particularly the "value of accumulating material wealth." This individual materialism," he said, could destroy "the heart and soul of our Indian institutions, our languages, our governing authority," and the only way to fight against it was to embrace "collective Indian power" and confront the white man and his constitutional manoeuvring head on. "We will no longer live on our knees. . . . From now on we will stand and fight on our feet, if necessary, we will die on our feet fighting for our Indian rights."[20]

* * *

In 1978, Manuel was still grasping for a strategy to confront the Trudeau government. He had set the Union lawyers on a word-by-word examination of the constitutional package, and he was quietly getting in touch with his fellow leaders across the country to sound them out on the issue. But he still had not decided how to use his people machine, which was revved up after the Penticton Assembly, in the constitutional battle.

In fact, his attention during this period was diverted by a small but growing challenge to the BC Union of Indian Chiefs from the more conservative ranks of the Indian movement. One of the leading figures was, once again, Bill Wilson.

After the Courtenay meeting, when his last-ditch attempt to merge the BC Union of Indian Chiefs and the BC Association of Non-Status Indians (BCANSI) failed, Wilson and his BCANSI contact, Bill Lightbown, settled on an "if you can't join them, beat them" strategy. If the Union would not merge with BCANSI, then they would try to lure the Union's supporters into a new organization that they themselves controlled.

In June 1976, BCANSI officially changed its constitution to allow Status Indians to become members. To accommodate the new membership, BCANSI also changed its name to United Native Nations (UNN), which was later temporarily expelled from the Native Council of Canada for its inclusion of both Status and non-Status members.

As Paul Tennant explained, Wilson emerged as the most prominent figure in the organization. He had been waiting in the wings during the final BCANSI meeting "even though, as a Status Indian, he could not be a member until the change in eligibility was approved, at which point he joined. With Lightbown's support, he was then elected as first president of

the United Native Nations."[21]

So, shortly after his rejection by the Union delegates, Bill Wilson was back on the British Columbia political scene with his own organization. He was already working with another former Union militant, George Watts, on a plan to replace the Union as the representative organization of British Columbia Indians. For their part, the Union activists saw Wilson's return as part of an orchestrated campaign by the three "W"s: Bill Wilson, George Watts and Fred Walchli, the DIA's regional superintendent, to overthrow the Union.

Wilson had begun working with the second "W," Watts, a few months earlier when they bumped into each other in the Nelson Place bar in Vancouver. The two men had never been friends and reportedly had little respect for one another, but when they met in the bar that evening and had a few drinks, they discovered they had a lot of common concerns.

Watts had been one of the main proponents of the funding rejection resolution in Chilliwack, but in the aftermath he had quit his position on the Union's executive committee and pulled his Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, which was comprised of three Vancouver Island and coastal bands, out of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs. In 1977, Wilson and Watts, along with the Native Brotherhood bands that had been trying to get the Union's funding, joined together in a Coalition of Native Indians and made a number of failed attempts to build an organization that could supplant the Union.

In 1978, Manuel's stature in British Columbia, along with his considerable pull in Ottawa, was able to stave off any immediate threat to his political base. But he obviously saw trouble in the future because he told the Union members not to be overly concerned about losing the Union as an institution, reminding them that the role of the Union was to serve the people, not to build a bureaucratic empire. "If we lose it," he told his staff, "we lose it. So be it."[22]

On the constitution issue, Manuel made a concerted attempt to form at least a working relationship with Wilson and Watts and the Native Brotherhood throughout 1978 and 1979. As early as January 1978, he met privately with the UNN and NB leadership to feel them out on their positions on a wide range of issues.

The meetings were a disappointment. The breakaway leaders criticized the Union's structure because it was built on the power of the bands. What they favoured were tribal-based organizations, which, they argued, were the

historical organizational unit of the First Nations.

Manuel was not wedded to the idea of a band versus tribal nation organization, but what he was trying to do—build a large peoples' movement that could directly challenge the entrenched power of colonialism on several fronts—required a single, large organization. Once the colonial structures were knocked down, they could go ahead and make the deals for their individual nations. But until that happened, they had to stick together and fight together or face the age-old forces of divide and conquer that kept the colonial structures in place.

Manuel had seen what type of bad deals could be forced on tribal organizations in 1974 when the Cree went off on their own to negotiate what he saw as the disastrous James Bay Agreement. Only by standing together within a powerful organization could Indian Nations avoid being picked off one by one like the Cree had been.

Despite Manuel's fears, he still did not close the door on cooperation with Wilson, Watts and the others. He wrote in *UBCIC News* that the Union "had no intention to persuade or compel any of our people to support our Indian government position. There is room for two positions. As a matter of fact, I would be prepared to support such a position if it was a clearly stated position. Providing, of course, our Indian Government position paper is supported by that group also."[23]

But Manuel found that "No one from either the Native Brotherhood or the United Native Nations, would respond to the Union's position on Indian Government. . . . I have to interpret their silence on 'Indian Government' to mean that both organizations do not support the position of Indian Government by the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs."[24]

The dissidents' refusal to endorse the principles of Indian government affirmed the suspicion of many in the Union that the only real aim of the "W"s was to destroy the organization from without after they had failed to destroy it from within.[25]

It is not certain whether Manuel himself was convinced of this, but Saul Terry, the young Bridge River Chief who had been elected as his vice president, remembers that during the meetings with the breakaway leaders, Manuel would ask them what their philosophy was in working for Indian peoples. He was disappointed when he was unable to get a clear answer to his simple, though fundamental, question. In the end, Manuel suspected that the reason for their silence was either that they had no clear philosophy, or

that “they had a philosophy for every occasion,” which amounted to the same thing.[26] But with or without a clear direction, it was becoming obvious that Wilson and Watts were after the Union’s funding, an ironic move when you consider that both had backed the Chilliwack resolution rejecting government funding on the grounds that it would result in the creation of a passive brown bureaucracy.

Watts and Wilson began to have some success only after they joined forces with the third “W,” Fred Walchli, who began to speak on their behalf in Ottawa. Even then, that success wasn’t immediate. The regional superintendent discovered an initial reluctance among the politicians to take on Manuel in British Columbia, where any direct move to fund a rival group to the Union would be interpreted as an attack on the NIB affiliate in the province. The Department of Indian Affairs was also concerned about direct funding of Wilson’s UNN since it included non-Status Indians who were not covered under the Indian Act.

To overcome DIA objections, Wilson and his allies called a province-wide conference of the UNN, the Native Brotherhood and the tribal groups to show their support. When Ottawa objected to funding the conference without the Union of Indian Chiefs, which was, after all, the sole recognized representative of British Columbia Status Indians, the organizers agreed to let the Union send two delegates. The Department then agreed to fund the conference and to send a DIA representative.

But Manuel refused to send any Union people since the conference was “being organized on a tribal basis and there isn’t any recognition of Bands and Band Councils as the governing structures with authority. The UBCIC structure recognizes Status Indians by way of their Chiefs, and our goal is to strengthen Band Councils. . . . Strong Band Councils are going to be at the heart of our land claims and we are very concerned that our work not be undermined by this tribal structure.”[27] The conference went on without Union participation and, at the end, the delegates decided to form a new organization, the Aboriginal Council of British Columbia or, as it popularly became known, ACBC. The founding meeting was set for May 1979, but as Paul Tennant observed, “it was a lacklustre affair with many of the delegates selected by the meeting’s organizers rather than by their own tribal groups. With the exceptions of Joe Mathias and George Watts, the political leaders of the tribal groups seemed unwilling to align themselves with any new province-wide body.”[28]

George Manuel in Argentina, 1978.

Still, the polarization bothered Manuel and he tried to make peace with members within Wilson's camp. It was around this time that he called Ron George, a young activist who had moved with Wilson from BCANSI to the UNN and was playing a prominent role in the new organization. Manuel invited him out to dinner, and Ron George remembers he was surprised at the invitation. In UNN quarters, Manuel was painted as the enemy, and Ron George was further surprised during the dinner when he found himself impressed by Manuel's openness and intelligence. Later, it was this impression of Manuel and his growing dissatisfaction with Wilson and Watts that led to Ron George throwing his lot in with the Union during the constitutional battle.

* * *

While Manuel was looking for allies in Wilson's backyard, he continued to carry out his politics of protest at the national level. When the health minister, Monique Bégin, announced a cutback of health services to Indian communities, the UBCIC leader joined other leaders of the NIB and called for a meeting with the minister. Bégin agreed, and Manuel flew to Ottawa to meet with her and her advisors.

To illustrate the point that he considered the cutbacks a betrayal of old agreements, Manuel brought a ceremonial blanket to give to Bégin as a symbol of the blankets that had been given to the Indians at the time of the treaties. But when he made the presentation, he also referred to the blankets intentionally infected with smallpox that were reportedly given to Native peoples in the nineteenth century.

As he handed over the gift, one of Bégin's officials grabbed her arm and warned her not to take it because he feared that Manuel had put some kind of poison on it. The minister was momentarily confused while Manuel stood dumbfounded at the ignorance of the men and women who still held dominion over his people.[29] To her credit, Bégin later called the UBCIC president and apologized for the slight, but by then, Bégin and her Liberal colleagues were on their way out. A few months after the incident, Pierre Trudeau called a long-overdue election and Joe Clark led the Progressive Conservatives to a narrow minority-government victory.

During the campaign, Manuel backed the NDP, yet he welcomed the Conservative victory because it temporarily halted Trudeau's constitution drive and because he had made some friends within the Conservative party during their long haul in opposition. The most important was Flora MacDonald, who had been her party's Indian Affairs critic in the mid-1970s and had often visited Manuel's NIB office for information and advice during the James Bay fight.

After the 1979 election, MacDonald became the minister for External Affairs and Manuel and Doug Sanders made a courtesy call to her Parliament Hill office and asked for funding for the World Council of Indigenous Peoples. Flora greeted them warmly and agreed to have the Canadian International Development Agency provide core funding to the WCIP. The eventual grant of $500,000 over a three-year period put the WCIP on a solid financial footing for the first time in its four-year history. The organization was then able to use the precedent of Canadian government aid as a lever to pry funding from Norway and other Scandinavian

governments who agreed to match Ottawa in making regular contributions to the World Council.

In 1978, the executive council of the WCIP held its annual meeting in Argentina. It was a time when the country was ruled by an oppressive military regime, so the WCIP was forced to curtail its public sittings and concentrate on the cultural aspects of the movement. The Canadian delegation had brought a troupe of Plains dancers, and they were in turn entertained by South American Indian dances, music and theatre.

This part of the conference was widely televised in Argentina, but the real meetings went on behind closed doors where the Canadian delegates asked what they could do to help their brothers and sisters. Someone suggested a solidarity tour in the north where the country's beleaguered Indian population had been pushed. Despite the danger, Manuel and Marie Marule agreed to go.

They embarked on the eight-hundred-kilometre bus trip with a representative of the Indigenous Association of Argentina, but they were met in the region by Argentine security forces who were then in the process of bringing the "the peace of the graveyard" to Argentina. The military men told Manuel and Marule point-blank that they were not to speak with any of the *Indigenes* of the region.

The warning was taken seriously by the Canadian Embassy, which suddenly offered to fly Manuel and Marule back to Buenos Aires for their own protection. They refused the offer because they feared that if they left the Argentineans who were with them behind, they would be arrested or simply "disappeared" by the security forces.

While Manuel and Marule were in the region, the only place they could meet with the local Indian leaders was in the local Catholic churches where a few priests dared to criticize the military dictatorship from the pulpit. But even the churches had lookouts, and when they were alerted that the military was in the area, the congregation would immediately begin singing hymns to cover up the whispered voices of protest.

* * *

Manuel made another trip south in 1979 when he travelled to Peru with Doug Sanders and Dave Monture to attend a meeting of the Council's South American branch, which was held in the countryside in Oriente Tambo. Monture remembers that Manuel was still concerned that the leaders of the national Indian organizations were not truly representative of their respective

peoples, so he tried to spend as much time as possible with the local people.

One incident in Peru that stuck in Monture's mind happened just before the conference started. He and Manuel were staying in a neighbouring village about a mile away from the conference site and were on their way to the meeting when Manuel suddenly strolled off the road toward a group of adobe huts. "It was like the pied piper," Monture recalled, with the children smiling and surrounding the limping stranger. While he was encircled by the children, Manuel turned to Monture, told him to go ahead to the meeting and said he would catch up later.

Monture watched as Manuel, who spoke not a word of Spanish, ducked into one of the huts and sat down. His surprised hosts soon produced some food and a cup of homemade chi-chi beer. Villagers from the other huts heard about the honoured guest and they began to flock to the house where he was sitting on the mud floor eating and drinking with his new-found friends. He stayed for almost two hours while the leaders and the official delegates grew more and more impatient.

When word got around that Manuel was visiting with the people, Monture remembers that the local leaders began to get nervous. As in Scandinavia, the leadership was concerned that Manuel's personal charisma would somehow undermine their local authority, and they were wondering what kind of political message he was sending them by delaying the meeting while he sat with the villagers.

While they were still trying to analyze the gesture, Manuel came into view and limped up to the podium in the centre of the square. He noticed that the women and men were divided, with the men front and centre and women to the side, so before he spoke, he went over to the women and presented them with gifts.

Then, with Rodrigo Contreras translating, he made what Monture described as an "incredibly friendly speech" in which "he won the hearts and minds of everyone there and had everyone laughing and totally dispelled a tense situation in which the local leaders were suspicious of him for arriving late and undercutting them politically with the masses." As Monture saw it, Manuel "had an absolute instinct, without speaking their language, without being totally briefed on the issue, but having shared a common experience of poverty and sickness and colonialism, he was able to totally win the day politically. And I don't know if anyone else could have done that.[30]

While Manuel was busy on both the British Columbia and international

fronts during 1979, he, along with the rest of the country, was caught off guard by another unexpected development on the national scene. Joe Clark's minority government had been defeated on its first budget in December 1979, and the Liberals returned to power in February 1980. It was back to the old faces and the old battles of the 1970s. The greatest battle would be over Pierre Trudeau's attempt to unilaterally patriate the Canadian Constitution.

Chapter 18: Constitution Express, 1980

> We can’t keep on talking about nations within Confederation. We have to start acting as nations.
>
> Bob Manuel to an All Chiefs meeting, November 1980

Immediately after the 1980 election, George Manuel called a meeting of the Union executive to decide how to fight the constitutional battle. The first priority, they agreed, would be to ensure that during the debate the national Indian movement would speak with one voice on a previously agreed upon program. The program they wanted Indian leaders to adopt was the BC Union of Indian Chief’s Aboriginal Rights Position Paper, which put the First Nations on an equal footing with the two other founding nations, the English and French, and gave them the right to veto any constitutional changes affecting them.

Manuel knew the Position Paper might be a difficult sell among some of his fellow Indian leaders. They were willing to settle for the much more restrictive Department of Indian Affairs plan that put Indian governments on the same level as municipalities with their power delegated from the provinces.

But he was determined to push the Union’s position at the upcoming National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) special assembly scheduled for late April, so he launched an intense nationwide lobbying effort to convince the more conservative Chiefs to back his proposals. In the end, he won by default. When the Chiefs arrived in Ottawa, they discovered the NIB leadership had failed to develop a plan of its own, and they adopted the Union’s Aboriginal Rights Position Paper with an overwhelming majority. For the first time, the national Indian movement had a coherent, step-by-step plan for implementing Indian governments in Canada.

After the British Columbia position was adopted, Manuel wanted the Assembly to send a strong message to Pierre Trudeau and the minister of Indian Affairs, John Munro, who had been invited to address the Indian leaders, so he organized a demonstration that would take place on Parliament Hill after the conference.

As it turned out, Trudeau's speech was more focused on the upcoming Quebec referendum on secession than on constitutional issues. He called on the Indian peoples to unite with "the white men" to defeat the separatists in the referendum because a victory for the Parti Québécois option would "bring to a standstill the process of renewed federalism." In addressing the constitutional matter, he made only a vague promise that Indian peoples would be included in the process on matters directly affecting them.

Munro then took the floor and announced, without warning, that he was going to launch a major review of the Indian Act and invited the Chiefs to take part. Manuel was immediately on his feet. He accused Munro of trying to deflect Indian energies and resources away from the constitutional battle. "If we take the Indian Act as a priority," he pointed out, "any involvement that we have in the constitution would be diluted."[1] The Union leader then announced that he would not listen to any more of Munro's speech and led the British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Maritime delegations into the streets and on to Parliament Hill with drums beating and placards reading "Make Us Partners in our Homeland," "We have Rights" and "Indian Participation in the Constitution." In the series of speeches in front of the Parliament buildings, Bob Manuel mocked the prime minister's description of the 1980s as "a decade for action," and said the only action the prime minister wanted was the type he could "push down our throats."[2]

Many of the Chiefs, however, stayed in the hall and accepted Trudeau's claim that Indians would be represented at the talks on matters that affected them; but interestingly, Noel Starblanket and many of his staff followed George Manuel out into the streets.

In the coming months, this split between the radicals from the west and the Maritimes and those who stayed at the NIB assembly continued to grow. The conservative forces within the NIB believed their silence on the Constitution would be rewarded with a seat at the table, while the Manuel faction saw the only way to have Aboriginal rights protected was an all-out confrontation with the government, using whatever political and legal means the First Nations had at their disposal. If all else failed, they were prepared to use direct action and civil disobedience to block the Trudeau patriation drive.

The Manuel strategy for confronting Trudeau gained more credibility

in early June when the prime minister announced twelve points he was prepared to deal with before patriation. He said the rest would have to wait until some unspecified future round of constitutional negotiations. Nowhere in the twelve points was a mention of Aboriginal rights, and Trudeau warned that if the provinces did not agree to his patriation package at a September federal-provincial conference, he would patriate the Constitution unilaterally.

When the Union lawyers analyzed Trudeau's proposal, they confirmed what Manuel had been concerned about earlier. The Charter of Rights provided "for the English and French people only" and noted that "Indian nations are not recognized as founding peoples." This could "open the doors for any Canadian to take legal action against an Indian or Indians because non-Indian Canadians do not have the equality and freedom to hunt, fish or have hereditary Indian reserve lands and Indian Band Governments."[3]

In the middle of the confusion over Trudeau's constitutional proposal, the NIB leadership suddenly came up for grabs when Starblanket announced that he would not seek re-election to the NIB presidency at the August Assembly. In a surprisingly frank admission, Starblanket said that he had been "acculturated" by his four years in Ottawa during which time he had developed a taste for "fine French wines, gourmet foods and good restaurants." He liked "to have lunch in a place like the Canadian Grill," he said, where he was likely to bump into a cabinet minister. He no longer had the drive needed to fight the fight and he knew it.[4]

After the announcement, there was talk of Manuel returning to lead the NIB, but he was committed to building his peoples' movement in British Columbia and to leading the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) into a new decade, so he quickly let it be known that he would not enter the race.

The Manuel family would be represented in the NIB election, however. In a surprise move, Bob Manuel decided to launch a campaign for the NIB presidency. When he told his father about his decision, George only asked him if he knew what he was getting into. His son told him he had no qualms about running. He had worked in Ottawa in the early 1970s and he had been the Union's liaison with the NIB for the past three years. He felt he was ready to take on the job and believed he could lead the national movement

in the direction of the peoples' movement in British Columbia.

Initially, his opponents were Del Riley, the president of the Union of Ontario Indians, and Clive Linklater, George Manuel's former vice president. The race tightened up when Linklater pulled out and refused to officially endorse either of the two remaining candidates.

Going into the assembly, Bob Manuel was backed by the more radical wing of the Indian movement. Many were surprised when Starblanket publicly endorsed him as his successor. Starblanket's move was explained in his opening remarks to the assembly when he described himself as "the last of the negotiators" and warned that "we cannot forever hold our young braves in check."[5] George Manuel kept a low profile during the campaign, working behind the scenes in hotel rooms, trying to promote his son's candidacy.

He made it clear, though, that it was Bob's show and his own role was merely that of a campaign worker. By the time the vote was held on August 13, Bob Manuel had the British Columbia delegation and Riley had the Ontario delegation sewn up. The rest of the country was evenly split, but in the end, Riley squeaked by with a 34–32 victory because Ontario had more votes.

For the Manuels and their supporters, however, the defeat was only a passing disappointment. In his campaign, Bob Manuel had made it clear that he was planning to take the NIB down a militant path, and the results showed that the representatives of 150,000 Canadian Indians had agreed to follow.

The movement was gaining steam and, just two weeks after the NIB election, the radical position was further strengthened when Trudeau reneged on his April promise to include Indian leaders in any decisions affecting the future of their people. He backtracked after consulting with the premiers who were worried that the recognition of Aboriginal rights would affect provincial control of lands and resources.

The fact that they had suddenly been dealt out of the negotiations seemed to catch Del Riley and the new team at the NIB off guard, and they began to search for a strategy to regain a seat at the table. But by this time, George Manuel was already leading the national battle from his British Columbia base.

In the summer of 1980, he had filed a legal declaration in the Federal Court "to ensure that no patriation occurs without the consent of the Indian

Nations."[6] The suit was in his name and in the name of nine British Columbia band Chiefs. The NIB had no choice but to back him on the court challenge as "a necessary step." As soon as his legal challenge was under way, Manuel began to work on his political strategy. What he needed, he believed, was a two-by-four he could use to get the government's attention, and his thoughts turned to some kind of march on Ottawa. Before he could work out a plan, however, he found himself involved in a similar direct action in British Columbia, but for a different purpose.

In early September, the young Shuswap Chief of the Spallumcheen Band, Wayne Christian, walked into the Union office and told Manuel that he was concerned about the Indian children who were being removed from the community by the provincial social services agents and placed with white families. During the past two decades, Spallumcheen had lost more than a hundred of its children and four more kids were about to be removed from the reserve by the provincial government.

The Spallumcheen Chief wanted to make some waves on the issue and said he was thinking of leading a caravan of parents from the interior to protest the policy on the streets of Vancouver.

Manuel immediately backed the plan. The right to protect their children was an essential element of his Aboriginal Rights Position Paper, and he appreciated the fact that the impetus for the protest came from the community leaders, rather than Union staffers. He told Christian what he told anybody who advocated radical action, "Go ahead, implement it and I'll back you."[7]

His first move was to send Louise Mandell to Spallumcheen to look after the legal aspects, and Jacob Marule, who was living in Chase, to help organize the caravan. With Marule's African National Congress experience, the Child Caravan, as it was called, was set up with military precision. It began with a cavalcade of cars and buses that left Spallumcheen and moved slowly through the interior to various staging areas where it gathered people from local communities and held rallies to publicize their cause.

Among those who joined the protest was George Manuel's first wife, Marceline, who was then the social services worker for the Neskonlith band government (of which Bob Manuel was still Chief). Marceline had a personal as well as professional interest in the issue. As she told a *Globe and Mail* reporter, she had been taken away from her own parents when she

was nine years old, and she knew the pain "suffered during the time I was away from my people."[8]

The Caravan arrived in Vancouver on Thanksgiving Day, and one thousand Indian protesters marched to the house of the Social Credit government Human Resources minister, Grace McCarthy, carrying signs demanding that the government stop "kidnapping" Indian children. They were told that McCarthy was "out to dinner," but as one newspaper columnist put it, "the press was in." The protesters told the reporters stories of "the heartbreak, alienation and suicide which the government's white-is-right policy" had caused. George Manuel turned up at McCarthy's house and urged the protesters on by charging that "the white man has taken away our lands, our fishing rights, our rights to govern ourselves and now, for a number of years, our children have been stolen."[9] Such statements won editorial support for the protesters from both the *Globe and Mail* and the major British Columbia dailies, and the press began to put pressure on McCarthy and the Social Credit government to address the Indians' concerns.

The media attention eventually forced McCarthy to meet with the leaders of the Child Caravan and sign an agreement that gave the Spallumcheen Band jurisdiction over the welfare of their children. The minister of Indian Affairs, John Munro, who had been watching the protest from the sidelines, moved to head off any visits to his own doorstep by agreeing to transfer the authority and funds for child welfare to the Spallumcheen Indian government.

The Child Caravan had been timed to arrive in Vancouver during the Union's General Assembly that was devoted largely to the Constitution. Manuel seized on the success of the caravan to link it to the constitutional battle.

In his speech to the delegates, he said Aboriginal rights belonged not only to them, but to their children. The Child Caravan had succeeded in winning the right for the bands to protect their children. "Do we have the right," Manuel asked, "to sell them out now? I say we do not have that right." In the name of the children and future generations, the First Nations had to fight against the Constitution because it "proposes to exterminate our hereditary relations with our territorial lands and our rights to self-determination as Nations of people." Manuel then declared a "national

emergency." He asked that everyone devote all of their time and energy to the constitutional battle.

"We must let [the peoples'] voices be heard at this critical time in our history," he concluded. "Together, we must find a way to drive the wolf from our door or make a way with our own hands."[10]

What Manuel had in mind was taking the battle to the steps of Parliament Hill. He told the delegates of his plan for a Constitution Express: The Union would charter trains to take hundreds of British Columbia Indians to Ottawa to demand that Aboriginal rights be included in Trudeau's patriation package and that those rights take precedence over the Charter of Rights.

As soon as the announcement was made, the Union office was transformed into a kind of war room, with Manuel and his advisors planning the logistics of the Express and setting out the concrete goals they wished to accomplish. First and foremost was the desire to unite all Indian peoples on the constitutional issue and show the government the determination of the First Nations to protect and promote their historic rights. But Manuel also saw the Express as a way "to create such an interest and understanding that when our legal cases or position are publicized, the Canadian public would have a more supportive position towards our cause."[11] This was typical of Manuel's "an end as a means to an end" approach. Like a good billiards player, he always tried to position himself for the next series of shots when he was examining the lay of the table.

To accomplish his first priority, uniting the people, he had the lawyers brief the seventy Union staff members on the details of the constitutional package and then sent them out to communities around the province to explain the importance of the issue and to urge the people to join the Express.

To ensure that the publicity surrounding the Express was favourable, he brought in the Elders to draw up a Code of Conduct, which prohibited all alcohol and drugs on the trains and called for strict self-discipline "in honour of the spirit of our Grandfathers and children yet to be born." Then he added one final touch. The government had begun public hearings on the Constitution in July, and it was assumed that the Union would ask to appear before the Parliamentary committee to confront the politicians. But instead of pleading in front of what he considered a politically handcuffed

committee, Manuel decided to deliver a petition to the Queen's representative in Canada, Governor General Ed Schreyer, urging Her Majesty "to refuse the Patriation of the Canadian Constitution until agreement with the Indian Nations is reached in Canada." The petition also demanded that the Indian Nations, Great Britain and Canada enter into internationally supervised trilateral negotiations in a neutral country to decide the constitution issue and that measures be taken "to separate Indian nations permanently from the jurisdiction and control of the Government of Canada whose intentions are hostile to our people."[12]

The petition would be handed to the Governor General at a ceremony at Rideau Hall. Then, after the ceremony, Manuel and the Union delegation would refuse to leave. With the press watching, they would take over the Queen's residence and begin to hold their own First Nations hearings on the Constitution.

To work out the details of the operation, Manuel enlisted the help of Walter Rudnicki, who also happened to be a friend and recent colleague of Schreyer's. Rudnicki had worked for Schreyer for a couple of years in the mid-1970s as the deputy minister of health when Schreyer was premier of Manitoba. Rudnicki returned to Ottawa in 1976 and set up a consulting office. He briefly came to national attention when he discovered a government blacklist naming him as part of a secret Extra-Parliamentary Opposition that included left-wing and community groups from across the country. Rudnicki went public with the blacklist and successfully sued the government for his inclusion on it.

When Manuel told him about the plan to occupy Rideau Hall in the fall of 1980, Rudnicki thought it was a nice piece of mischief and immediately agreed to help at the Ottawa end. He soon discovered that his friend Schreyer was also privately pleased at the thought of the British Columbia Indians taking over the official residence. Rudnicki was sipping Courvoisier with the Governor General at Rideau Hall in late October when Schreyer told him that he had heard from the intelligence people that an Indian constitutional train was coming to town and that they planned to take over his home.

Rudnicki didn't acknowledge that he was working with Manuel on the plan, but he asked Schreyer what he thought about it. "As far as I'm concerned," the Governor General replied with a smile, "they can do it."[13]

As Rudnicki recalled, Schreyer agreed that the best thing he could do was check into the royal suite at the Chateau Laurier with his wife and let George Manuel and the others carry on with their hearings.

While the Schreyers were anticipating the arrival of the British Columbia Indians, the plans for the Express were going on at a frantic pace in both Ottawa and Vancouver. Bob Manuel was in charge of the Ottawa preparations, but he and his team were having trouble lining up food, lodgings and places to hold rallies for the estimated one thousand people who would be arriving in the capital. By the time he returned to Vancouver, all they had was "six bags of groceries and about two billets," and they had decided that they would have to take over the old Indian Affairs building to house the protesters.

Up to this point, George Manuel had been planning to ride the Express to Ottawa along with the others. But two weeks before the departure, a medical check-up showed serious heart irregularities and evidence of a second mild heart attack. His doctors issued a stern warning.

Either he sharply curtail his activities or he would dramatically shorten his life. But George Manuel was involved in what he saw as the most important political battle of his life, and his only concession to his doctor was to agree to fly to Ottawa with the advance team rather than making the four-day trek by train.

When he arrived in the capital, he discovered that even though the train hadn't yet left Vancouver, the Express was already having an effect on politicians and security forces—they were becoming jittery over the rumours that the British Columbia Indians were planning the same sort of all-out assault on Parliament Hill that the young Red Power activists had attempted in 1974.

Their paranoia increased on November 24 when almost one thousand British Columbia Indians showed up at Vancouver's VIA station on Main Street to purchase tickets for the Express. Many of them marked the importance of the event by wearing their traditional dress, and others brought their drums to entertain the people during the journey.

The atmosphere on the train was festive as it left the station, but in many ways it would be a difficult four days. The Express was made up of two trains, one that would take the northern route through the interior of British Columbia, up to Edmonton and then down to Winnipeg where it would link up with the second train that would pass through southern

British Columbia, Calgary and Regina. Both trains were jammed. Two hundred Elders, who were not up to the journey, had flown to Ottawa, but the Elders who decided to take the train were given the beds and the fold-down seats, and the luggage racks were converted into makeshift cradles for the smaller children.

To keep order, each car had an appointed security officer, but as it turned out they were not necessary. The train trip became a kind of rolling powwow, with singing, chanting and drumming mixed with Union-organized political workshops on the Constitution.

As they wound their way through the interior Rockies, the trains were met at every stop by crowds of local Indians who had come to join the Express or to offer food, money and encouragement to the trekkers.

As the land flattened out and they began to roll across the prairies, Alberta Indians were waiting alongside the track to catch a glimpse of the trains and wave at the protesters.

By the time the Express arrived in Manitoba, hundreds of Native peoples were flocking to the stations to encourage their British Columbia brothers and sisters.

When the two trains arrived in Winnipeg, the crowd had swelled to more than a thousand people, and the national press began to take notice.

There was an overnight stop in Winnipeg, and a large and enthusiastic rally was held with speaker after speaker denouncing the attempt to undermine Aboriginal rights with the new constitutional package. After hours of impassioned speeches and drumming and singing, offers of overnight billets poured in, to the point where there were, as one organizer put it, “not enough Indians to go around.”[14]

When the train pulled out of Winnipeg the next evening, it became apparent that the authorities were also taking a closer look at the Express. A couple of the new porters looked suspiciously like RCMP officers, and at midnight, four hours out of the station, the train ground to a halt between two giant rock faces at the western edge of the Canadian shield. A contingent of RCMP officers swarmed aboard, announcing that there had been a bomb threat and ordered everyone off the train. Bob Manuel met with some of the officers and protested sending the children, the old people and people in wheelchairs out into the cold, but the RCMP officers insisted they empty the train.

Bob Manuel called the leaders of the Express back to the baggage car

and relayed the RCMP's message. The reaction was generally "That's bullshit, they just want to search the train," but they agreed that they had no choice and went back and told the others. The suspicion that the RCMP were using the bomb threat to search for weapons was confirmed when the people saw they were walled in by rock faces and then were told to open their own bags while the RCMP officers poked around with flashlights.

No weapons, other than ceremonial spears, were found, and the train was allowed to go on its way. But the alarm over the Express was continuing to grow in Ottawa as the police began to fortify not only Parliament Hill, but the entire capital with metal riot fences.

As Doug Sanders, who was then working as an advisor to the NIB saw it, only an Indian organization could have created the same "wonderful sense of uncertainty. There is nothing politicians hate more," he said, "than not being able to control information and come to some kind of conclusion about what was going to happen." Sanders also observed, "It has always seemed that one of the strengths of Indian activism has been the ability to keep government off balance. And one of the ways you keep it off balance is to have a kind of ferment in the organization so you can't tell them what you are going to do anyway.[15]"

The government's concern was reflected in a sudden reversal made by the Parliamentary Committee studying the patriation package. The Committee had originally planned to close its hearings on December 6, but as the train chugged toward Ottawa, the fear of a possible Indian assault on the Hill led to the government extending the hearings and inviting the British Columbia Indian delegation to present a brief. It was the first concrete concession that any Indian group had won on the Constitution, but for Manuel and the other British Columbia leaders it was not nearly enough. The leaders of the Express announced that they would only negotiate with the government on a Nation-to-Nation basis. If the government refused, they would send a delegation to the United Nations to put their case in front of the world body.

Ironically, there were others in Ottawa who were having trouble coming to terms with the Express; the leaders of the National Indian Brotherhood were not pleased to find Manuel bringing his confrontational tactics to their doorstep. For Del Riley, who had beaten Bob Manuel by only two votes that summer, the Express, coming out of the Manuels' British Columbia heartland, appeared as a direct challenge to his leadership.

Riley and the NIB kept their distance during the planning stages of the Express and suggested that it would have no effect either as a publicity stunt or as a wedge that could pry concessions from the government. George Manuel found the lack of support from the NIB executive disappointing since he had continually assured the Ottawa leadership of his support in whatever strategy the NIB proposed. He saw the Express as complementary to, rather than in competition with, any NIB-led initiative.

The suspicion from the NIB officials was in sharp contrast to the support the Express received from the people of Ottawa and particularly from the Mayor, Marion Dewar. A couple of days before the Express was scheduled to arrive in the capital, Dewar called a press conference to announce that a trainload of Indian people was on the way from British Columbia and asked the people to "open your hearts and open your homes" to them and to take the opportunity to learn something about their culture.[16] The citizens responded. Offers for billets flooded in from non-Natives who had similar concerns about the Constitution. Mayor Dewar's plea was also answered by the large unions and the churches and even by the Girl Guides in Ottawa, who rallied their troops to ensure that the nearly one thousand British Columbia Indians would have food and lodging during their stay in the city.

When Manuel met with his advance team in his Ottawa hotel room two days before the train was scheduled to arrive, the mood was buoyant. The Express was getting favourable publicity across the country; the omission of Aboriginal rights in the Constitution had suddenly moved from a fringe concern to one of the central preoccupations of the national news media. The British Columbia action was also being endorsed by many of the key Indian leaders who were gathering in Ottawa for an All Chiefs Conference, and the Union staffers were busy in the hotel suites trying to line up support for the Express from the majority of the Chiefs.

But the congratulatory mood of the Union strategists was suddenly broken when Manuel stood up and said that something was wrong and that he wanted someone to drive him to the hospital. He was taken to the University Civic Hospital where he spent the night conscious but hooked up to monitors in the intensive care unit. Manuel was seriously ill with heart disease, and his refusal to dismount from the political buckin' horse was ruining his already fragile health. So on November 28, he watched the Constitution Express chug into the capital from his hospital bed. It was a

remarkable show. When the train arrived, it was greeted by one thousand Indian supporters who had travelled to the area or who were in town for the All Chiefs meeting. As the trekkers stepped onto the platform, they were met with the sound of drumming and chanting and a delegation of Elders in traditional clothing who offered a formal welcome.

When Bob Manuel, who was one of the first off the train, spotted Del Riley and John Munro waiting to greet them, he brushed past them to an area in the station that had been set up by Marion Dewar for a press conference. In a toughly worded speech, he told the gathered Indian delegations and the press that unless Trudeau amended the patriation package to include a guarantee of Aboriginal rights, the Constitution Express would head down to New York to put the Indian case before the United Nations.

When a reporter mentioned a statement made by the prime minister the day before to the effect that he was confused by what the Indians meant by Aboriginal rights, Bob Manuel retorted: “We’ve been talking about it on the way here. What we want is the re-establishment of our language, our dignity and pride.” He then charged that “Trudeau’s vision is one of Indians without a homeland” where the majority of Canada’s Indians would “end up in the slums of the city.” He warned again that if their demands for inclusion in the Constitution were not met, they would not only go to the United Nations to protest, but they would begin to “work toward establishing a seat there.”[17]

Most of the people on the Express, tired, hungry and longing for showers, were ushered into buses and taken to a local hockey arena to rest and to sort out the billets. But the leaders, Bob Manuel, Wayne Christian and Archie Pootlas, tapped the shoulders of the team of activists they had selected on the trains and led them back onto a bus for the trip to deliver the petition to the Governor General and to take over Rideau Hall.

When they gathered on the bus, most of the rank and file still knew nothing of the takeover plan. In fact, Bob Manuel only had the plan confirmed when a code word was spoken on the phone during a brief train stop in Ontario. On the bus on the way to Rideau Hall, the activists were told only that they were to listen to what the leadership said during the petition ceremony. If they were asked to lie down on the floor and block the doors, they were to do it. It was important that they acted together and acted quickly.

When they arrived at Rideau Hall, they were surprised to find there was another Indian delegation ahead of them, a group of traditional dancers from Vancouver Island who knew nothing of the Union's plans.

Schreyer ushered in the Union people and sat them down to watch the performance. Most of the British Columbia activists had eaten very little on the train and hadn't had time to eat in Ottawa, so they were relieved after the performance when they were ushered into a reception room where hors d' oeuvres were served. Bob Manuel recalls that they were so hungry that they were practically gobbling up the little sandwiches with both hands.

When the time finally came to present the Union's petition to the Governor General, an Elder stood up to explain the basis of their claim for self-government: "The Creator has given us the right to govern ourselves and the right of self-determination. The rights and responsibilities given to us by the Creator cannot be altered or taken away by any other nation."[18]

When the ceremony was finished, Bob Manuel took the Vancouver Island people aside and told them about the planned sit-in. They balked. In fact, they said it was the stupidest idea they'd ever heard. Bob hesitated. He and everyone in his group were exhausted. He knew he should carry out the plan and tell them to sit down, but then he thought of the impression it would make if the Vancouver Island people walked out and began to condemn their fellow British Columbia Indians to the waiting press. He decided to leave Rideau Hall after the petition was accepted.[19]

The fact that the sit-in wasn't carried out did not block the momentum of the Express, however. While Bob and his delegation were at Rideau Hall, the rest of the Union leadership was working long into the night planning their strategy for the All Chiefs meeting the following day. They would try to pass a resolution to boycott the parliamentary committee hearings and to win support for sending a delegation to the United Nations.

The back-room blitz of sympathetic Chiefs bore fruit two days later when the issue was put before the conference. With George Manuel in the hospital, it was left to his son to lead the delegation. Bob told the Chiefs that waiting until after patriation of the Constitution for the inclusion of Aboriginal rights was not an option, because after patriation the new amending formula would require provincial consent to any changes, and the provinces had already shown that they "were hostile to Native demands to form Indian governments." At the end of his speech he issued a challenge.

“We can’t keep on talking about nations within confederation,” he said in a booming voice. ‘’We’ve got to start acting as nations.” He then pointed a finger at John Munro, invited by Riley to be an observer at the conference, and told him: “Munro, tell Trudeau to answer us within three days. . . . Don’t expect us to play around with some joint parliamentary committee!”[20]

Before the vote on the resolution the following day, there was a sense that things were starting to move in the British Columbia Indians’ favour. First, word came from Rotterdam that the Russell Tribunal had condemned Canada, the United States and five Latin American countries for “stealing land and suppressing the cultures of fourteen tribal groups.”[21] The NDP government in Saskatchewan then announced it would ask that Trudeau amend the charter to include Native rights. At the same time, the national NDP leader, Ed Broadbent, stood up in the House of Commons and condemned the overreaction of the security forces in putting up the riot fences around the city as an insult to the Native peoples. A motion was passed with unanimous consent calling for the removal of the barricades.

To the Chiefs, it seemed that George Manuel and the BC Union Constitution Express were succeeding where Riley and the NIB leadership had failed. So when the issue of attending the parliamentary committee came before the assembly, the Chiefs backed the Union resolution that called for a boycott of the hearings.

Riley took the vote as a personal defeat but glossed over the Union’s role in the debate. He told the press that “It was just a matter of the various band Chiefs not fully understanding the parliamentary process,” and he blamed himself and the rest of the NIB leadership “for not adequately informing them.”[22]

With the boycott in place, the people of the Express were sent out in small groups to Parliament Hill to lobby the MPs and the senators individually about Indian government and the Union’s constitutional position.

While the members of the governing bodies were being blanketed by Indian lobbyists, the Express was dominating the CBC and CTV national news. It was their lead story for five nights running, and it was picked up by the U.S. media, which broadcast the Canadian Indian struggle to an estimated fifty million American viewers.

Most Canadians were reacting favourably to the protesters, particularly to the colourful and dignified ceremonies the Native groups were performing on Parliament Hill. By the 1990s, sweetgrass burning, prayers from the Elders and circle dances had become part of Canada's political landscape. But in 1980, the cultural expression of the First Nations was still something of a novelty, and the British Columbia Indians were transformed into media stars.

George Manuel experienced this feeling first-hand in the hospital when a doctor asked him if he was a member of the Constitution Express. When he said that he was, he found staff from around the hospital—doctors, nurses and service workers—stopping by to visit and offer encouraging words about the Indians' constitutional fight and to praise their behaviour in Ottawa. Because of the Express, Manuel later told his supporters, "I was treated like a king. That is how much you stimulated Ottawa."[23]

When Ottawa is stimulated, the first people to get aroused are the politicians. As the public pressure mounted in the Indians' favour, Broadbent threatened to withdraw NDP support for the patriation package if the protection of Aboriginal rights was not included. The NDP was then joined by dissenting voices from the Conservative and Liberal parties. The whole Trudeau package seemed to be unravelling, and Jean Chrétien, who was acting as Trudeau's point man on the Constitution, was forced to work frantically behind the scenes with the official NIB, Inuit and Métis leadership to try to strike a deal.

While Chrétien was negotiating with the national leaders, the British Columbia Indians were making good on their promise to take their case to the United Nations. George Manuel and Marie Marule, whom he had also enlisted to help organize the Express, had pinpointed the U.N.'s Decolonization Committee as the best place to lobby, and they sent Dave Monture and Wayne Haimila, a young Cree law student, to New York to arrange for meetings with the international representatives and for a demonstration in the square in front of the U.N.

During the trip, they must have exaggerated a bit about how many trekkers were on their way down from Canada because, when the bus load of fifty-four Union activists pulled up in front of the U.N. building, they were surprised to see the square surrounded by riot fences and hundreds of New York City police officers. When Saul Terry stepped off the bus, he was politely asked by one of the policemen where the rest of the group was.

Terry and the others were amused to find that somehow the fifty-four people had been transformed into fifty-four bus loads and had the New York police battening the city down for the thousands of Canadian Indians they expected to come storming down from the North.

The U.N. trip had a concrete impact on the Native cause when four countries representing the Non-Aligned Nations—Tanzania, Cuba, Iran and Yugoslavia—agreed to put their case for independence before the Decolonization Committee and recommended that it later go to the United Nations General Assembly for a vote. For the First Nations, it was another important step toward internationalizing their cause—and toward embarrassing the Canadian government in Ottawa into acting on the First Nations' demands.

While the official delegation was off to New York, the rest of the British Columbia Indians were invited to powwows at nearby Indian reserves like Akwesasne where the Longhouse people put on a feast and held traditional dances in their honour. By the second week in December, when the train began the trip back west, most of those on board felt that the event had changed their lives in a fundamental way, and they credited their War Chief, George Manuel, for the transformation.

In a very real sense, the Express also changed the Constitution. It had led to the press focusing on the Indian cause and to the NDP and a number of Liberal and Conservative members threatening action if Native rights were not included in the package. Before the trains left town, Jean Chrétien, Del Riley of the National Indian Brotherhood, Harry Daniels of the Native Council of Canada and Charlie Watt of the Inuit Tapirisat came to an agreement on the inclusion of Aboriginal rights in the patriation package.

According to the agreement, the Indian Act would be exempted from the Charter of Rights, and Aboriginal rights would be recognized in the body of the Constitution. The exact definition of those rights, however, would be decided in a series of federal-provincial conferences that would take place after patriation was complete.

Riley, Daniels and Watt were reported to have had tears of joy in their eyes when the deal was struck with Chrétien. They all agreed to drop their protest against patriation, and Daniels even went so far as to offer to carry the Constitution home from London himself if it would be of help to the minister.

At first, most Indian, Métis and Inuit leaders fell into line with words

of praise for the deal. It was, after all, a dramatic improvement.

But George Manuel was not a better-than-nothing type of leader. Instead of savouring his victory in forcing changes to the fundamental law of the land, he surprised most Indian leaders by denouncing the deal as “an empty box.”[24]

When all was said and done, he argued, it would still be the premiers who would have the final say in defining Aboriginal rights and in delineating the powers of Indian governments. These were the same premiers, he argued, who had traditionally opposed any expansion of Indian rights and who had recently blocked Indians from a seat at the constitutional table.

Manuel felt no need to keep the national organization’s promise to Chrétien to stop lobbying against the deal. Only days after he was released from the Vancouver hospital where he had been transferred from Ottawa, he called the Union activists together and told them they would have to continue the fight. Alone if need be. If Ottawa wouldn’t listen, they would take their case to the world.

Part IV: Final Days

> Our people have been awakened by the spirit of our ancestors and we can continue the beat of our drums throughout our Indian nations.
>
> George Manuel, October 1981

Chapter 19: European Express, 1981–1982

> George Manuel looks like a dumb Indian type of guy, but he is a shrewd son-of-a-bitch.
>
> Official at the Canadian High Commission, London

While George Manuel was in hospital in Ottawa, he was told he would need major heart surgery. The operation was scheduled for early May, but he was determined to continue working in the intervening months.

His first order of business was an assessment of the Constitution Express. He told his staff that he believed the movement had developed "a political sophistication to face our oppressors with courage and determination. . . . This is no longer one man's battle, or that of a few. We are a movement of a thousand people and more, and it will continue to grow."[1]

The Constitution Express and its immediate aftermath had, in fact, turned out to be a significant turning point in Canada's relations with the First Nations. It signalled for the first time that Indian leaders were to be dealt with as players in the constitutional game. Under Manuel's leadership, the Indian peoples of Canada had pushed themselves into the hall where the Constitution was being decided and they would not be pushed outside again.

The next stage of the struggle was to get a place at the table. Manuel kept the drums beating by planning a European Express that would take the First Nations' case to Germany, then to Holland, France and Britain, where they would lobby the European powers to intervene to protect the rights of the Indigenous peoples in their former colonies.

While the trip was being organized, the British Columbia Union of Indian Chiefs held constitutional meetings around the province to keep the people focused on the issue. Manuel was also pushing the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) to withdraw its support for the Chrétien package, and he joined with Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba in asking for Del Riley's resignation if the NIB continued to support the government proposal.

Riley responded in February 1981 by hinting that he would, indeed,

resign to save the NIB from self-destruction. But when it came down to actually leaving his post or reversing his position, he took the latter route by withdrawing his approval of the Chrétien package. He joined Manuel and the western bloc by stating that he, too, would refuse to accept a provincial role in interpreting the Aboriginal rights clause in the Constitution.

But once again, Manuel and the Union were far ahead of the NIB. The Union leader had hired a British lawyer to take the matter to the High Court in London to try to get an injunction against patriation. Specifically, what the Union was asking for was a veto power in the amending formula on any issue that touched on Aboriginal or Treaty Rights.

While the constitutional battle was continuing on the home front, Manuel was also facing an increased challenge from within his own province as Fred Walchli began to work openly with the breakaway leaders. After calling a meeting of the Union's opponents in Vancouver, Walchli convened a series of regional meetings where he "suggested meeting times, prepared the agendas, coordinated travel and hotel arrangements" for the groups that were after the Union's funding.[2]

To counter this threat to the Union's funding base, Manuel flew to Ottawa in February to confront the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) bureaucrats and to argue that his organization was still the only representative of Status Indians in British Columbia. After the embarrassment Manuel had caused the government over the Constitution, however, the Department was much cooler to him than it had been in the past.

Manuel's welcome in Ottawa turned even chillier when he refused an invitation by Munro to sit in the House of Commons gallery while the minister was addressing the constitutional issue. Instead, Manuel showed up uninvited at Munro's press conference afterward and virtually took it over. He condemned the minister for failing to offer any prospect of restoring Indian land and self-government rights and said he would never support the patriation of the Constitution in its present form.

Munro was furious at Manuel's upstaging and is reported to have yelled, "Come off it, George, we're all politicians here!" To the amusement of the press, Manuel yelled back, "I'm not a politician, I'm a statesman!"[3] Munro didn't even crack a smile, and he later wrote Manuel a scathing letter where he described the Union leader's actions as "reprehensible."[4] As

Manuel had warned his CD workers in the 1960s, if you are going to make waves, you are going to make enemies.

While Manuel was coming under attack from all sides, he was forced to make a difficult decision about his future in the international movement. The upcoming World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) Assembly in Canberra, Australia coincided with the date of his heart surgery. It was an election year at the WCIP, but after assessing his health and looking at the scope of the constitutional battle still ahead, he decided to resign the presidency of the international organization he had founded and shaped over the previous six years.

But the future of the WCIP would remain a passion in his life, and before his surgery he found time to make another international trip. He travelled to Chile with the backing of a group of Canadian churches to investigate the plight of the Chilean Mapuche Indians who were being persecuted by the Pinochet regime. In his report on the Mapuche, which was sent directly to Prime Minister Trudeau, Manuel charged that "Canada's economic policy allows individual bank, corporate and crown investments in Chile to take place while it condemns Chile loudly for violating human-rights in very select forums."[5] His findings were also submitted to the Canberra Assembly, and the WCIP agreed to work at the U.N. for action against the Chilean government.

Even though he was in a Vancouver hospital for his heart surgery, Manuel's presence was also felt in Australia when Del Riley read Manuel's note to the 850 Indigenous delegates and observers. In the note, he told them about his medical problems and said he was "deeply saddened" by his absence, but that he was present in his "mind, spirit and heart" as they pursued their Indigenous ideology of struggle.[6]

Manuel was succeeded in the post of the WCIP president by a friend from Costa Rica, Jose Carlos Morales. Before the Assembly ended, Manuel was named as the WCIP's permanent ambassador-at-large, which would allow him to continue to travel for the organization and to represent them at conferences around the world.

In the summer of 1981, Manuel was still hoping to get back into the constitutional fight, but after his bypass operation, he was hit by a stroke that temporarily paralyzed his left side. His legendary determination allowed him to fight back and eventually regain his mobility, but in the

minds of many of his friends and colleagues, the stroke was a blow that signalled the end of George Manuel's leadership.

While he was slowly recovering at home, Rosalee Tiyza and the young "Manuelistas" were telling their ailing leader that he should not give up the fight. If he couldn't walk, they told him, they would be his legs. And whatever happened, they would carry on the struggle he had launched.[7] That point was proven during the summer of 1981 when a large group of British Columbia Native women marched into the Department of Indian Affairs "Black Tower" office building in downtown Vancouver and demanded a public investigation into the role of the DIA in the province and in particular into the manoeuvrings of Fred Walchli.

The action had begun in Manuel's Neskonlith community when Joyce Willard and a group of Manuel's women supporters founded an organization called Concerned Aboriginal Women's Movement to protest the fact that pro-Union communities, like Neskonlith, were being squeezed for funds by Walchli's department.* They had come up with a plan for a woman's sit-in at the Black Tower, and they took the idea to an interior Chiefs' meeting in Lytton.

The men were skeptical, so the women of Neskonlith held a meeting with the women of Lytton, and the plan began to take shape. They decided they would march into the DIA's Vancouver office and stay there until Walchli resigned and the Department promised to investigate his conduct in the province. To ensure international publicity and that the government would negotiate rather than immediately send in the police, they planned the takeover to coincide with the arrival of the world leaders in Canada for the G-7 summit.

As soon as they had the details set, they began to contact Native women around the province. Among the first recruits were George's first wife, Marceline, and their daughter Vera. One of the largest contingents came from the Mount Currie band, and as the takeover date approached, they emerged as the leading force in the protest.

At the appointed time, eighty Concerned Aboriginal Women marched into the Black Tower and took over the DIA floor. Walchli was caught in his own office and surrounded by the Elders, some in their eighties, who blocked his exit for several hours while they politely stated their grievances. When they had said their piece, they let the regional superintendent of Indian Affairs leave the building while they settled in to deal with the head

office in Ottawa.

The first reaction of the DIA in Ottawa was to go to the courts and try to get an injunction ordering the women out. The courts, however, imposed a mediator, Nelson Small Legs Sr., who was the father of an Albertan Indian who committed suicide in 1976 to protest the DIA's mishandling of the lives of Indian peoples.

Nelson Small Legs Jr. had become a symbol of resistance to DIA oppression, but when his father arrived to mediate between the women and the Department, the women politely declined the offer. What they wanted was a meeting with Ottawa and they repeated their demand for Walchli's resignation.

When the mediator was turned away, the courts granted the government injunction, but the women refused to budge. As the days wore on, they found themselves winning support from various ethnic and women's organizations in the city. The government finally sent in an Ottawa DIA official, Ray Perrault, to negotiate. After the meeting, Perrault flew back to Ottawa to speak to the minister about their demands.

Supporters of the sit-in continued to bring food and drink for the women and children who were with them, and some of the supporters, like Rosalee Tiyza, came in and out of the building frequently. Others remained the whole time and defied the police to move in and arrest them.

Eventually, that is what happened. Late at night, a week after the occupation began, the police stormed the building and dragged the women down the freight elevators and into waiting paddy wagons. Some, like Marceline Manuel, were injured in the expulsion and had to be taken to hospital, but when Louise Mandell was called to the police station, she found the protesters in high spirits with the older women exclaiming that they should have made that gesture of defiance years ago.

Mandell was able to get all the women off when she argued that the women were allowed to enter and leave the building during the occupation, which constituted implied consent on the part of the government. In the end, the women did not succeed in getting a public investigation into the DIA operations in the province, but they did, in effect, end the career of the third "W," Fred Walchli, who was later shifted aside and eventually squeezed out of the Department.[8]

While the women were occupying the Black Tower and Manuel was resting at home, the younger generation of leaders was running the Union.

The number one priority was still the Constitution, and they were carrying out Manuel's plans for the European Express with Union activists spending the fall publicizing and raising funds for the European trip, including holding a benefit concert that attracted musicians like Buffy Sainte-Marie.

The delegation was slated to leave for Hanover, Germany on November 1. But before they left there was the question of the Union leadership to settle. The General Assembly was scheduled for October and there was a feeling that for health reasons Manuel should step aside from the rigours of day-to-day leadership and work for the Union as a strategist and advisor.

Manuel was slowly regaining his strength and was considering serving for one more term as the Union president, but his mind was changed during a meeting in Vancouver's Dufferin Hotel with Phillip Paul, Saul Terry and his son, Bob. All three suggested he step down. For Manuel, the fact that his old friend and ally Paul was among them was the deciding factor.

At the time, Paul was disillusioned about what he termed "Walchli's buy-back program" of Indian leaders, and he had decided to return to his reserve in Saanich to fight the government at the community level. Manuel and Paul had shared a combative ideology and a friendship since the early 1960s, and Manuel always took Paul's advice seriously. So, after a long discussion about what was best for the Union, Manuel agreed not to run for re-election.

The Union's Assembly took place from October 28 to 30, 1981. Manuel was in a reflective mood as he gave his farewell address. He spoke about the need to create viable Indian institutions to avoid being assimilated into the dominant society. He called for

> real soul searching in terms of what to do in the future. We are going to have to decide for ourselves whether we want to be absorbed into the institutions of the white man. We've got to think about that because that's where the government wants to take us in the Resolution to Patriate the Constitution, to assimilate our people into their society and absorb us into their institutions. Is that what we want?

He feared some Indian leaders would accept assimilation, but he insisted that "our people don't want to be assimilated, they want to grow and develop as Indians and be proud as Indians. . . . We have an ideology. An ideology is something that never dies, it goes on and on and it will outlive many lives."[9]

It took time for many British Columbia Indians to understand that

Manuel, for the first time since 1957, was no longer the leader of an Indian organization. But the fact that the Manuel era was still not over was personified in the election of the new president.

In the Dufferin Hotel room, Terry and Paul had decided to back Bob Manuel, and when the vote was held on the floor of the Assembly, he received massive support from the Chiefs. In his acceptance speech, Bob Manuel pledged to continue what his father had begun, leading the Union on the path to sovereign Indian government.

The momentum that George Manuel had put in play continued. Two days after the Assembly ended, his son led a group of one hundred British Columbia Indians to Europe in a last-ditch attempt to try to block the Trudeau patriation drive. As in the Ottawa Express, those travelling to Europe were encouraged to bring their traditional costumes and drums; this cultural display had a strong impact when they got off the plane in Germany. The Germans had a long fascination with North American Indians, and the press reflected this interest with intense and sympathetic reporting of the Indian cause. Even the former German Chancellor, Willie Brandt, got into the act by meeting with the Canadian Indian delegation to discuss his North-South Dialogue initiative.

The Express was just leaving on the second leg of the trip to France when news came of a last-minute agreement by the federal government and nine of the provincial premiers on a patriation package. As a price to pay for the agreement, Chrétien had dropped all reference to Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

The news that the limited recognition of Indian rights had been removed was a shock to all those on the trip. But it made them even more determined to press their case. In Paris, the Union organized a march from the Canadian embassy to the British embassy to protest Canada's genocidal policies against their people. The march was briefly joined by a well-disciplined contingent from the Irish Republican Army carrying banners in support of the First Nations' cause in Canada.

By the time the Express reached Belgium, crowds of three thousand people were turning out to show support. The Belgian military even supplied an honour guard for a sweetgrass-burning ceremony the British Columbia Indians held in Flanders Field to commemorate their fathers and grandfathers who had died in European wars.

The main part of the protest would take place in Britain, however.

When the Union delegates arrived in London, they moved into an office the NIB had set up. Then they began an intense lobbying effort of every single British MP and member of the House of Lords to convince them to block patriation of the BNA Act.

They had their greatest success with the British Labour Party, which assured the Canadian Indians that they would put on "a three-line whip" in the British House of Commons to block Trudeau's patriation bid if Native rights were not restored to the Constitution. The Labour Party's only condition was that their opposition to the package be approved by their fraternal party in Canada, the NDP.[10]

A measure of their success in Britain can be made from the number of External Affairs diplomats who were sent into the various countries to engage in damage control in the wake of the Express. The BC Union leaders also had a taste of the Canadian government's irritation at them when a Canadian official at the High Commission in Trafalgar Square was overheard commenting that George Manuel, the instigator behind the Express, "looks like a dumb Indian type guy, but he is a shrewd son-of-a-bitch."[11]

Unlike William Pierrish's sojourn to London more than a half century before, the British Columbia Indians would not be depending on the High Commission to deliver their message to the Crown. They had already received an invitation to Buckingham Palace where they were received by the Queen's representatives. It was a heady moment for all concerned, although Wayne Christian recalls they were a bit nervous that their sweetgrass ceremony would set off the smoke alarms in the palace as it had in the practice run at the hotel the night before.

While the European Express was in London, the protest against the exclusion of Native rights from the Constitution was also growing in Canada, not only from Native organizations, but from all sectors of society. Editorialists showed particular disdain for the short shrift given to Native rights, with most papers describing the premiers as "shameful" and "narrow minded" for trying to remove recognition of the First Nations in the country's fundamental law.

The same views were being expressed in the British press. The complaints of Bob Manuel and the members of the Express over the new patriation deal found a willing audience and renewed the opposition of

many of the British MPs to patriating the Constitution without the recognition of Native rights.

Back in British Columbia, the Union was showing its opposition to the patriation process by working with the Nuxalk people in staging a formal declaration of independence. Under the glare of television lights, a Nuxalk spokesman announced that "Through our Creator, we now assert our sovereignty, independence and self determination as the Nuxalk nation, recognizing and practising our own laws to govern all Nuxalk land, water, air and resources."[12] The Nuxalk Chief and Union activist Archie Pootlas then warned that "blood would be spilled" if Canada refused to recognize the inherent self-governing rights of all of the country's First Nations.

The clamour within the country and the embarrassment abroad caused by the European Express finally began to show results. The federal New Democratic Party and MPs from other parties threatened to vote against the patriation resolution unless recognition of Native rights was restored. Prime Minister Trudeau had heard that patriation would likely be refused by the British if the Canadian House of Commons was divided along party lines on the issue, so he was forced to go back to the premiers and ask them to reinstate the two Aboriginal rights clauses to his package. But with another hitch. The original agreement between Chrétien and the national Native leaders had called for a recognition of "Aboriginal rights," but to win the support of Alberta's Peter Lougheed, Chrétien inserted the word "existing" in front of "Aboriginal rights." In the final draft, the Aboriginal rights section in the Constitution, Section 35, was titled Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada. It reads:

> (1) The existing Aboriginal rights and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.
>
> (2) In this Act "Aboriginal peoples of Canada" includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.

Exactly what "Aboriginal rights" meant would be left to the series of constitutional conferences between the federal government, the provincial premiers and the leaders of Aboriginal organizations. What was being offered in one hand, Manuel and the Union activists feared, would soon be taken away with another.

The BC Union activists had an opportunity for one parting shot at Trudeau when he was in Kamloops on a speaking tour and a group of 150

Indians gathered to protest his constitutional initiative. Wayne Christian elbowed his way through the security men and, standing only a foot away from the prime minister, objected to “the lies you have been telling the world about Indian people.” Trudeau demanded to know what lies, and then he asked who Christian represented. When Christian told him that he represented the Shuswap Nation, Trudeau continued. “Five thousand? Well, there were many more Indian leaders in Ottawa last February representing many more than you and they were happy with the resolution.” Trudeau is then reported to have glared at the Chief and said, “Perhaps you’d better meet with them and settle your lies between yourselves and don’t accuse me of lying.”[13] The agitated Trudeau was then hustled away by his security men and soon after his constitutional package was approved by the British Parliament. The Canada Act was signed into law by Queen Elizabeth on April 17, 1982.

George Manuel, whose Constitution Express had done more than anything else to get the government to include the promise of the federal-provincial talks in the Constitution, would not be directly involved in them. But the talks did have an unforeseen effect on British Columbia politics as the various warring factions realized they would have to pull together in a common front against the premiers.

In January 1983, representatives of the Union and virtually every Indian organization and Indian band in the province attended the British Columbia Aboriginal Rights Conference in Penticton to hammer out a common constitutional position. It was the most representative British Columbia Indian gathering since the beginning of the Union in 1969. Many personal wounds between the Manuel and Wilson camps remained, but by 1983 there was also a growing sense that the internal battles had only served to exhaust the players to the benefit of the government.

The Union’s constitutional battle had, in fact, left it $380,000 in debt, and Bob Manuel was forced to drastically curtail its activities.

During his term of office, he managed to get the debt down to $30,000, but in doing so he had to pare the staff and programs to the bone and then convince some creditors to take fifty cents on the dollar for the money they were owed.

The changes in British Columbia were also influenced by changes on the national scene when the NIB was restructured into the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), with its membership made up of approximately six

hundred bands rather than provincial and territorial organizations. With the bands directly represented in the Assembly of First Nations, the existing band-based provincial bodies suddenly seemed redundant, and the organization of Tribal Councils rapidly began to fill the void of local leadership.

The Shuswap Nation organized itself into the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council in 1985, and Bob Manuel left the Union and began to work with the new organization. Saul Terry took over the Union and tried to expand its mandate so it could include Tribal Councils but with limited success.

All of these changes were coming without the involvement of George Manuel. His personal struggle was coming to an end.

He had recovered slowly from his previous stroke and was considering moving back onto the active political scene, but his hopes were dashed by a second and much more serious stroke that left him in a wheelchair for most of his remaining days.

---

* Joyce Willard later married Bob Manuel, who was the Neskonlith band Chief at the time.

Chapter 20: Passing the Torch, 1982–1989

> The torch George Manuel inherited was barely aflame. The torch he passed on was burning bright.
>
> Harold Cardinal, on the legacy of George Manuel

The man of the people returned to the people. And George Manuel would leave the world as he had come into it: battling poverty and illness.

To a great extent, his poverty was caused by his principles. Unlike many other Native leaders, Manuel refused offers of a genteel retirement into the Senate. He turned them down because he believed it would be a betrayal of his struggle for First Nations sovereignty if he allowed himself, at the end of his days, to be absorbed by the Canadian government structure he had spent his life trying to overturn.

At the same time, the peoples' movement could not provide its aging warrior with the luxury of a pension. Manuel's only income came from a small and, as it turned out, temporary consultant's salary from the Union. Even more disappointing, he found he could not rely on housing from his band. The house he had built in the early 1950s was no longer habitable, and despite the fact that his son was the band Chief, there wasn't any reserve housing available for him and Marlene and their children. Manuel was forced to live out his days in a small duplex across the river in Chase.

Still, he had managed to make one last trip as the ambassador of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP), and it was one of the most emotional he ever took. During late 1981 there had been rumours of a brutal military campaign in the Guatemalan Highlands against the local Mayan Indians. Manuel was well enough in July 1982 to attend an international Indigenous peoples conference in Regina, and he took the opportunity to alert the delegates to the wave of military violence that was breaking over the Guatemalan Indians.

When Manuel later heard stories of the Guatemalan Maya struggling through the country's northern jungles and into hastily assembled refugee camps in Mexico, he resolved to go down to see what he could do to help. He travelled to southern Mexico, and through local contacts he was taken

into the isolated jungle camps where the Guatemalans were gathering.

At the age of sixty-one, suffering from progressive heart disease, he found himself sitting on the dirt floor of a shack in the rain forest, watching a mother and her two-year-old baby slumped in a darkened corner. “When this weakened mother has no more milk for her child,” he was told, “the child will die” because there was no food in the camp.

In another shack, thirty people were jammed together, and George Manuel was told by one woman how “the Army dragged her husband from their home and killed him in the most cruel fashion, before burning their home and cornfield.”[1] Others told him of soldiers descending on villages and bashing the heads of children against adobe walls and of soldiers gathering men, women and children into village squares and mowing them down with machine-gun fire.

The Mayan survivors in the Mexican camps lacked food, drinking water and decent shelter, and the rate of dengue fever and malaria was reaching epidemic proportions. Manuel was witnessing firsthand the genocidal policies that had devastated the Indian peoples of North America centuries earlier. In the faces of the dying and the grieving, he saw the Shuswap people his grandfather had told him about during the smallpox epidemic. Massacres by bullets, decimation by disease: the Indian wars had never stopped in the Americas.

Still, Manuel learned that in the Mayan language there is no word for “conquest.” After four hundred years of Spanish and Ladino presence on their lands, the Maya still spoke only of “occupation.” Along with the rest of the Fourth World Manuel had helped to shape, they still dreamed of liberation; amid the ashes of defeat, they were preparing to renew the fight.

They would not be alone. The refugees who struggled across the border were given initial shelter, small bags of com, yucca, chickens and seeds by the Mexican Indians of the Chiapas rainforest who were themselves desperately poor. Manuel was deeply touched by the fact that the poor Mexican Indians were willing to stretch out their hands and their meagre resources to help their brothers and sisters, and he viewed this act of solidarity as a model for the Fourth World movement.

When he returned to Canada, Manuel issued a plea for Canadian Indians and their supporters to join with the Mexican Indians in aiding the Guatemalans. He asked for “food, medicine and tools so they can support themselves. A plastic sheet to put over their heads. A spoon. A cup. Seeds.”

Anything to help the beleaguered Maya.[2]

While Manuel was raising funds and awareness about the Guatemalan tragedy, he found himself receiving a number of late-in-life honours at home. They began when he was still in the hospital recovering from the stroke. The University of British Columbia (UBC) announced it was awarding him an Honorary Doctor of Laws. The irony of a man with barely two years of formal education receiving such an award was not lost on Manuel, but because he was still in the hospital, the oldest son of his second marriage, George Jr., was sent to the UBC convocation to accept it.

In 1984, when he had recovered sufficiently to be pushed around in a wheelchair, the Union held a ceremony where he was given the title of Grand Chief. Friends and Indian leaders from across the country gathered in Neskonlith to mark his contribution to the cause.

He was able to meet again with colleagues from the days when he was organizing for the North America Indian Brotherhood (NAIB) and people he worked with at the Native Indian Brotherhood (NIB), the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the World Council of Indigenous Peoples.

In 1986 he was awarded the Order of Canada. He accepted it with reluctance because he did not think it right that he accept accolades from a government that still refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of the First Nations. His friends pointed out that it came from the Crown and not the Canadian government, so he finally agreed to attend the ceremony.

But when he arrived in Ottawa, he changed his mind and decided to stay in his hotel room. At the last minute, he was convinced to go through with it, but he later told reporters that he didn't know why he had bothered to accept it. When he was back in his room, he described the medal as being worth less than a fifty-cent piece and tossed it into the wastebasket.

Even though his health was deteriorating, Manuel was still determined to escape the retiring statesman's role of being buried alive in honours. He wanted to spend his last days working for the movement with whatever strength he could muster, and in January 1985 he ran and won a seat on the Neskonlith band council along with his son Bob, who was elected for his fifth straight term as Chief. George's election to the council ensured that his voice would be heard. But the job of councillor came with only a token salary, and his financial position became precarious a few months later when Saul Terry sent George a letter informing him that he had to cut off his Union consultant's salary. Facing increased government cutbacks, the

Union no longer had the money to pay it.

In his last years, Manuel was at least able to spend time with his family. His last child, Ida, had been born in 1978 when he was busy with the fish wars and was beginning his constitutional battle. Marlene remembers that when he arrived at the hospital shortly after Ida was born, he was so tired that he fell asleep on the bed beside them. In the mid-1980s, he finally had a chance to get to know his children. Young George Jr. recalls that before his father "was in his wheelchair, we hardly ever talked. He was always gone to meetings." Now George Jr. got to know the man whose name he carried, and was able to watch a western on television with him or have his father teach him how to make fish-head soup.[3] Occasionally, Marlene would take Manuel to Vancouver where he would meet with old friends and go out for Chinese food and talk about the current political struggles and about the old days, thirty years earlier, when he and Jacob Kruger travelled the province trying to rouse the people into action and spent the nights in haystacks in their travels between communities.

Even though he appreciated his time with his family, there was still a sense of restlessness about Manuel. He wanted to serve the cause, but his body would not allow it. By 1986 his mental sharpness was also beginning to waver. Guy Lavallee, who was living in Vancouver at the time, saw Manuel three or four times a year and remembers that "sometimes his conversation would be inconsistent, so we had to repeat often with him. It was in this gradually weakening mental and physical condition that Manuel found himself in his last and least satisfying political battle. It began when an issue came up at a band council meeting that had to do with a Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) self-government initiative. Bob Manuel saw an opportunity to expand the council's power and he agreed to take over the DIA responsibilities, but his father opposed the move. George thought that Bob was caving in to the Department, and he accused him of betraying the principles of Indian government that the Union had set out under his leadership.

He confronted his son on the issue, but the two could not sort out their differences. So George Manuel, an aging and ailing political warhorse, set out on his last campaign. He ran for the Chief's position in the 1987 band election and won the job he had held thirty years earlier.

George Manuel would barely live out his term. As his health continued to fail, he spent his last months in the traditional way: taking a rigorous

personal inventory. “The old people used to tell us,” he told a friend visiting him at the hospital, “that when you come to the end of your life, you have to think of all the people you hurt. And this is the time for me.” In the fall of 1989, George slipped into a coma from which he never recovered. He died on November 15, 1989.

News of George Manuel’s death travelled quickly through Indian country and beyond. In Ottawa, Dave Monture picked up his phone and heard Bill Badcock telling him that “Shogun is dead.” Rodrigo Contreras was in Belize attending the first meeting of the Caribbean branch of the WCIP when the call came. The meeting was halted while tributes were paid to their founding president. The news also travelled across the ocean and into the camps of the Sámi reindeer herders, and a boy who knew George Manuel as a distant father made an attempt to get in touch with the family but was hampered by the lack of a mutual language.

The funeral was a fairly low-key affair. Senator Len Marchand tried to arrange to have a friend bring a horse-drawn wagon to carry the coffin, but the friend was snowed in in the high country and couldn’t make it. In the valley where the services were held, the snow turned to a cold November drizzle, and the three hundred friends and colleagues from across Canada stood quietly in the rain while Wayne Christian read the eulogy that had been written by George and Marceline’s oldest daughter, Vera.

“The trail he forged for Indian people is well marked,” Vera Manuel had written. “Many doors have been opened; many children were born and grew up in the wake of this man’s vision. . . . And he never asked of anyone any sacrifice that he was not willing to give himself. As a leader he truly walked with the people. He was the biggest Chief of all times—a War Chief.”[4] Dressed in his buckskins, George Manuel was laid to rest on a windy hillside above Neskonlith on November 20, 1989, a few hundred metres from the spot where he was born.

Epilogue

George Manuel, the War Chief and the greatest Canadian and international Indigenous leader of his generation, was gone and the torch was passed. As Harold Cardinal had observed, the torch that George Manuel had inherited had been barely aflame. When he entered the political fray in the 1950s, the only access most Indians had to power was to sit outside the Indian agent's office, hat in hand, and plead for gifts from a low-level government appointee who reigned over them.

As chair of the Indian Advisory Board in the 1960s, George Manuel had led the Indian movement to the door of the minister of Indian Affairs. In the early 1970s, as the president of the National Indian Brotherhood, he gained access to the cabinet room and the prime minister's office. With the Constitution Express, the Indian leadership was able to bring the Indian cause to the table with the eleven men who made the decisions on how to carve up the political and economic power of the land.

On the international scene, his vision shaped the Fourth World movement and gave it a voice and a place at the United Nations through the World Council of Indigenous Peoples. In a very real sense, George Manuel's death was mourned in the jungles of Central America, the mountains of Peru, the deserts of Australia and the far reaches of Scandinavia.

In the end, only death was able to throw George Manuel off the buckin' horse of the First Nations' struggle, but that struggle has continued unabated.

For most of the 1980s, the Indian movement in Canada was preoccupied with the negotiations between the federal and provincial governments to define the meaning of the Aboriginal rights clause in the 1982 Constitution.

As George Manuel had predicted, the negotiations ended in deadlock when the premiers refused to recognize the inherent right of Native peoples to govern themselves. But the negotiations were not a waste of time. While the premiers were turning a deaf ear to the Indian cause, the heavily

publicized conferences provided the Indian leadership with a platform to make their case directly to the Canadian people, and support for the Native cause continued to increase throughout the decade.

The movement's greatest leader, George Manuel, offered a legacy of struggle and a blueprint for attaining sovereignty that informs the present and, undoubtedly, the future. As Rosalee Tiyza put it, George Manuel said that he wanted us to be so "radically charged that, no matter where we went, change would follow. And I suppose he's right. After working with him, I can't go back to the way I was. I can only go forward."

Afterword: Kanahus Manuel

Kanahus Manuel is a birth keeper and a founder of the activist group Tiny House Warriors. She is the granddaughter of George Manuel and daughter of Arthur Manuel. She is one of the leading figures of the Indigenous resistance in British Columbia and an important part of the legacy of struggle that her grandfather set in motion.

I am writing this from our Tiny House Warrior community on Secwepemc territory. We have been here for the past year, living along the proposed Trans Mountain pipeline route beside the section of forest that has been set aside for pipeline workers' man camps.

It has not been an easy winter—our tiny houses are almost buried in snow, and they are connected by deep ditches where we and the camp dogs can move from house to house. But we are eating well, we have wild meat frozen outside with berries from the summer, and we have enough wood to keep our houses warm. We are happy—and we are determined. In fact, we are unbelievably determined. Trans Mountain will never be permitted to bring their thousand men onto our land to attack our women and to build their dirty pipeline.

This is one of the front lines in the climate battle and in the battle for Indigenous lands and sovereignty. It is one of many. Defenders of the land are taking stands across Turtle Island and beyond. We are all continuing the work of my grandfather, George Manuel, who led the great awakening of his generation, when the people rose up after a century of vicious oppression to once again assert our rights to land and liberty.

As you have seen, he began by building organizations and ended by building a people's movement that had more in common with today's Defenders of the Land and Idle No More movements than with organizations like today's Assembly of First Nations. He led the way in the fight for lost land and liberty inside so-called Canada and, as Harold Cardinal put it, "The torch George Manuel inherited was barely aflame. The torch he passed on was burning bright."

My grandfather also pushed our struggle onto the international stage

when he founded the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, and today the world is starting to listen. This winter, the United Nations condemned the genocidal rape and murders of our women and girls that was uncovered by the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report and by the U.N.'s Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which condemned Canada for trying to push the pipeline through our lands without our consent. The Committee ordered the government to cease all construction—to proceed only if we give our consent.

And we will never consent. This pipeline is one of the most serious threats to our territories, and we have never consented to this new invasion of our lands. We are fighting for our sovereign rights but also against the threat to the world that will be caused by the burning of the dirty oil of this pipeline during a time of climate emergency.

Almost a hundred years after my grandfather's birth, the Canadian state is still using all the methods of violence and intimidation to keep us off our land. But we are fighting back. As I write, my twin sister, Mayuk, my younger sister, Snutekwe, and my brother-in-law Isha Jules, as well as myself, are all facing new criminal charges after arrests for defending our land. That is what they do to us—criminalize us for leaving our tiny reserves to step back onto our lands. But we will not step down or step back. We are committed to upholding our collective and spiritual responsibility and jurisdiction to look after the land, the language and the culture of our people. That is not only our right under international law, it is our duty as Secwepemc people.

My grandfather blazed the trail for his generation. His son Arthur Manuel, my father, continued his struggle for his generation and wrote about it in books he co-authored with Grand Chief Ron Derrickson, *Unsettling Canada* and *Reconciliation Manifesto.*

My generation, led by my sisters, our women warriors, are writing our story with our deeds. We honour our past as we fight for our future liberation. Our grandfathers and grandmothers, our mothers and fathers, have our prayers and our deepest gratitude. And I know with certainty that they are never far from us. We draw on their strength and we take your struggle into the future. My own children are already joining the fight for the freedom of being Secwepemc people on Secwepemc land.

The children, who are our future, are also rooted in our past. I gave birth to my children on the land surrounded by women Elders who knew the

rituals surrounding birth and the songs that were to be sung. I had my children in the forest looking up at the mountains and bringing new life in the way my people have since time immemorial. And despite all of the hard days, the hungry days, the days when we are handcuffed and jailed, we also know the beauty of it. This is what you also have to understand about my grandfather and all of the women and men of his generation, and my father and mother and all the women and men of their generation—they fought so hard because they knew the beauty of it. The beauty of being Secwepemc people on Secwempec land.

To preserve that beauty, we will block the dirty oil pipeline, and the thousand men who try to force it through, with our bodies and souls. We will be here until the end of time and we will never stand down. That is the solemn promise we make in the name of my Grandfather George Manuel, in the name of all those who came before and in the name of all of those who are not yet born.

Tiny House Warrior village Secwepemcul’ecw,
February 2020

Notes

Chapter 1

1 Minutes of the Proceedings of the Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Indian Affairs, 26-27 May 1960, p. 643.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., 642.
4 Ibid.

Chapter 2

1 Michael Posluns Collection, York University, T17.
2 Amy August interview.
3 Bob Manuel interview.
4 Amy August interview.
5 George Manuel and Michael Posluns, *The Fourth World and Indian Reality* (Toronto, 1974), 40.
6 Celia Haig-Brown, *Resistance and Renewal Surviving the Indian Residential School* (Vancouver,1988), 36.
7 Posluns Collection, York University, T14.
8 Mary Thomas interview.
9 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World*, 35.
10 Cited in Paul Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian La Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989* (Vancouver, 1990), 92.
11 *Kamloops Standard Sentinel*, November 12, 1921.
12 Amy August interview.
13 Shuswap Nation archives.
14 Cited in Minutes of Proceedings of the Joint Senate and House of Commons, May 25, 1960, p. 583.
15 Cited in Proceedings of the Joint Senate and House of Commons Committee on Indian Affairs, May 25, 1961, p. 583.
16 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 52.
17 Mary Thomas interview.
18 Ibid.

19 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 63.
20 Haig-Brown, *Resistance and Renewal,* 44.
21 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 67.
22 Rosalee Tiyza interview.
23 Haig-Brown, *Resistance and Renewal,* 54.
24 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 36.
25 Ibid., 65.
26 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics,* 126.

Chapter 3

1 House of Commons Debates, April 9, 1937, p. 2867.
2 Ibid., May 2, 1932, p. 2537.
3 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 100.
4 Ibid., 67.
5 Ibid., 101.
6 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 2.
7 *The Canadian Forum,* October 1944, p. 153.
8 *The Native Voice,* April 1951, p. 14.
9 Mary Thomas interview.
10 Bob Manuel interview.
11 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 107.
12 Ibid.

Chapter 4

1 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 109.
2 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics,* 126.
3 Joe Manuel interview.
4 Arthur Manuel interview.
5 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 112.
6 Joe Manuel interview.
7 Cited in Proceedings of the Joint Senate and House of Commons Committee on Indian Affairs, May 25, 1960, p. 599.
8 Cited in *Indian News,* May 1956, p. 2.
9 Cited in *The Vancouver Sun,* May 3, 1958, p. 3.
10 Posluns tapes, T14.
11 Posluns tapes, T12.
12 Henry Castilliou Jr. interview.
13 Bob Manuel interview.

14 Henry Castilliou Jr. interview.
15 Bob Manuel interview.
16 Henry Castilliou Jr. interview.
17 Len Marchand interview.
18 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics,* 128.
19 Ibid.
20 *Kamloops Standard Sentinel,* April 27, 1959, p. 1.
21 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics,* 129.
22 Posluns tapes, T12.
23 Henry Castilliou Jr. interview.

Chapter 5

1 Indian-Eskimo Association bulletin, Autumn, 1961.
2 Proceedings of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Indian Affairs, May 26, 1960.
3 At the time, Indian Affairs was a branch of the Citizenship and Immigration Ministry.
4 *The Native Voice,* December 1962.
5 *The Native Voice,* November 1961, p. 7.
6 Ibid.
7 *The Native Voice,* May 1962, p. 7.
8 Arthur Manuel interview.
9 Bob Manuel interview.
10 Mary Thomas interview.
11 *The Native Voice,* April 1963, p. 1.
12 *The Native Voice,* November 1963, p. 1.
13 *The Native Voice,* February 1964, p. 2.
14 *Maclean's,* July 6, 1963.
15 Walter Rudnicki interview.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.

Chapter 6

1 Phillip Paul interview.
2 Walter Rudnicki interview.
3 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 132.
4 Ibid., 133.
5 Michael Posluns tapes, T11.

6 Tony Karch interview.
7 Harkewel Singh Basi report to the British Columbia Social Services Dept.
8 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 136.
9 Wes Modeste interview.
10 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 141.
11 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 144.
12 Ibid.
13 Wes Modeste interview.
14 Report by George Manuel to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, February 1969, p. 6.
15 Phillip Paul interview.
16 Minutes of the first meeting, National Indian Advisory Board, Ottawa, January 10–12, 1966.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 *The Native Voice,* June 1964, p. 3.
20 House of Commons Debates, October 2, 1964, p. 8697.
21 Len Marchand interview.
22 Minutes of the second meeting of the National Indian Advisory Board, September 19–23, 1966, p. 55.
23 Minutes of the fifth meeting of the National Indian Advisory Board, August 2–4 1967, p. 59.
24 Ibid., 65.
25 Speeches by the Hon. Arthur Laing, p. 4.
26 An address by the Hon. Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, February 25, 1967, p. 22.
27 *Indian News* insert, April 1967.
28 Walter Rudnicki interview.
29 Text of remarks by the Hon. Arthur Laing to Indian Day, Expo ‘67, p. 3.
30 Phillip Paul interview.
31 Ibid.
32 *Calgary Herald,* November 25, 1968.
33 Notes for an address by the Hon. Arthur Laing, February 12, 1967, p. 3.
34 Phillip Paul interview.
35 *Canadian News Facts,* I-I8 January 1968, p. 7.

Chapter 7

1 Harold Cardinal, *The Unjust Society*, (Edmonton, 1969), 1.
2 *Maclean's*, December 1969, p. 20.
3 Cardinal, *The Unjust Society,* 118.
4 Harold Cardinal interview.
5 Ibid.
6 Report by George Manuel on Indian Leadership Development Workshops, February 1969, p. 13.
7 Ibid., 13.
8 Arthur Manuel interview.
9 House of Commons Debates, December 5, 1969, p. 3527.
10 Cardinal, *The Unjust Society,* 107.
11 Harold Cardinal interview.
12 Ibid.
13 Christine Deom interview.
14 Arthur Manuel interview.
15 Jean Chrétien, *Straight from the Heart* (Toronto, 1985), 57.
16 Cited in speech on Indian Day at Expo '67 by Walter Currie, July 7, 1967.
17 Arthur Laing's introduction to *Choosing a Path*, Department of Indian Affairs, 1967.
18 Cardinal, *The Unjust Society,* 119.
19 House of Commons Debates, January 23, 1969, p. 4738.
20 Phillip Paul interview.
21 Report of the Indian Consultation meeting, Port Alberni, October 30, 1968, p. 36.
22 Rapporteurs' account of the National Conference on the Indian Act, April 28–May 2, 1969, p. 20.
23 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World,* 179.

Chapter 8

1 An address by the Hon. Jean Chrétien to the Indian-Eskimo Association, September 20, 1968, p. 7.
2 Canadian Facts on File, June 16–20, 1968, p. 289.
3 Cardinal, *The Unjust Society,* 1.
4 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World*, 126.
5 Prime Minister Trudeau, Remarks on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, August 8, 1969, p. 1.

6 Ibid.
7 Harold Cardinal interview.
8 House of Commons Debates, March 6, 1969, p. 6310.
9 House of Commons Debates, July 11, 1969, p. 11132.
10 Cited in *Indian News,* November 1969, p. 4.
11 Pauline Comeau and Aldo Santin, *The First Canadians: A Profile of Canada's Native People Today* (Toronto, 1990), 9.
12 *Indian News,* March 1959, p. 3 13.
13 *Indian News,* August 1969, p. 4.
14 Dave Monture interview.
15 Minutes of the National Indian Brotherhood General Assembly, July 17–19, 1969.
16 Ibid.
17 *Indian News,* August 1969, p. 6.
18 Minutes of the National Indian Brotherhood Executive Council Meeting, March 23, 1969.
19 Phillip Paul interview.
20 Cited in Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics,* 154.
21 Cover page of *Citizens Plus,* the Indian Association of Alberta, June 1970.
22 Ibid., 1.
23 Harold Cardinal interview.
24 *Indian News,* September 1970, p. 6.
25 *Indian News,* June 1970, p. 1.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid., 7.
28 Harold Cardinal interview.
29 Ibid.
30 Henry Castilliou Jr. interview.

Chapter 9

1 Minutes of the National Indian Brotherhood meeting, August 20–23, 1970.
2 Ibid.
3 Communication from the National Indian Brotherhood, August 20–23, 1970.
4 Minutes of the meeting of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs,

November 16–19, 1971, p. 34.
5 Minutes of the Executive Council meeting, September 25–27, 1970, p. 53.
6 Minutes of the Executive Council meeting, September 25–27, 1970, p. 54.
7 Resolutions from the Executive Council meeting, September 25–27, 1970.
8 Letter from H.B. Robinson, deputy minister of the Department of Indian Affairs, to George Manuel, October 8, 1970.
9 *News of the North*, November 19, 1970.
10 Marie Marule interview.
11 Phillip Paul interview.
12 Michael Posluns interview.
13 Presentation by George Manuel to the National Indian Brotherhood Executive Council, March 10–12, 1971.
14 President's Report to the General Assembly, July 14–16, 1971.
15 Ibid.
16 Cited in *Indian News*, June 1971, p. 1.
17 Minutes of the USCIC Second Annual Convention, November 16, 1970.

Chapter 10

1 George Manuel speech on Economic Development, October 1972.
2 NIB press release, President's Response to Education Report of the Commons Committee of Indian Affairs, June 1971.
3 Harold Cardinal interview.
4 Speech to the 8th Annual School Committee Conference of Indian Teachers, November 8, 1971.
5 Cited in Harold Cardinal, *Rebirth of Canada's Indians* (Edmonton, 1977), 80.
6 Ibid., 66.
7 George Manuel speech on Economic Development, October 1972.
8 Ibid.
9 Letter from George Manuel to the Hon. Jean Chrétien, June 5, 1971.
10 Speech by George Manuel to Iroquois and Allied Indian Association, April 17, 1971.
11 Cited in *Indian News*, January 1973, p. 1.
12 Letter from George Manuel to the Right Hon. P.E. Trudeau, October 24, 1972.
13 Notes for a speech to the British Columbia Association of Non-Status

Indians by George Manuel, November 17, 1971.
14 Minutes of the UBCIC Meeting, November 16–19, 1971.

Chapter 11

1 George Manuel, Report on the New Zealand and Australia tour, 1971, p. 4.
2 Ibid., 6.
3 Telegram #167 from the High Commission, Wellington, to the Under-Secretary of External Affairs, Ottawa, March 19, 1971.
4 Michael Posluns tapes, T14.
5 George Manuel, Report on the New Zealand and Australia tour, 1971, pp. 7–8.
6 Len Marchand interview.
7 George Manuel, report on the New Zealand and Australia tour, 1971, p. 15.
8 Ibid.
9 *The Whitehorse Star,* May 27, 1971.
10 Ibid.
11 *Canadian Press* report, Calgary, May 13, 1971.
12 *Indian News,* Vol.4, 11x, p. 1.
13 NIB press release, Celebration of Uhuru, January 1972.
14 Cited in Telex from DSLAM to EXTOTT, December 13, 1971.
15 Telex to Under-Sec. of State for External Affairs from the Canadian High Commission, Dar Es Salaam, December 31, 1971.
16 Telex to Under-Sec. of State from High Commission, Dar Es Salaam, December 17, 1971.
17 Cited in Telex from DSLAM to EXTOTT, December 15, 1971.
18 Telex to Under-Sec. of State for External Affairs from the Canadian High Commission, Dar Es Salaam, December 28, 1971.
19 Ibid.
20 Cited in speech by George Manuel, October 25, 1974, p. 13.
21 Michael Posluns tapes, T18.
22 Speech by George Manuel, October 25, 1974.
23 Letter from George Manuel to the Hon. Jack Davis, Min. of the Environment, February 11, 1972.
24 George Manuel’s Report on the U.N. Conference on the Environment, p. 2.

25 Ibid., 3.
26 Ibid., 4.
27 Ibid., 5.
28 Ibid., 7.
29 Jamie Deacey interview.
30 Ibid.
31 George Manuel's Report on the U.N. Conference on the Environment, p. 8.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 11.

Chapter 12

1 George Manuel's speech to the UBCIC Annual Meeting, November 1972, p. 1.
2 Cardinal, *The Rebirth of Canada's Indians* (Edmonton, 1970), 148.
3 Doug Sanders, Land Claims Report to the NIB, 1974.
4 Cited in Cardinal, *The Rebirth of Canada's Indians*, 137.
5 Len Marchand interview.
6 NIB press release, January 1973.
7 Roy MacGregor, *Chief: The Fearless Vision of Billy Diamond* (Toronto, 1989), 54.
8 Cited in MacGregor, *Chief*, 67–68.
9 Speech by George Manuel at Man and His World, August 22, 1971, 7.
10 Jamie Deacey interview.
11 MacGregor, *Chief*, 101.
12 Ibid., 101–102.
13 Ibid., 104.
14 Cited in *Maclean's*, May 1973.
15 Press release, George Manuel's Response to Recent Federal Position Regarding James Bay, January 1974.
16 *Indian News*, Special Issue, Vol.17, No.7.
17 *Canadian News Facts*, February 15, 1974, p. 1149
18 *Indian News*, Special Issue, Vol.17, No.7.
19 Marie Marule interview.
20 NIB president's annual report, 1974.
21 Guy Lavallee interview.
22 Rodrigo Contreras interview.

Chapter 13

1 *Calgary Herald,* April 1971.
2 Ibid.
3 Bob Manuel interview.
4 Vern Harper, *Following the Red Path* (Toronto, 1979), 52–3.
5 Minutes of the Joint NIB-Cabinet Committee Meeting, October 3, 1974.
6 Cited in *Indian News,* September 1973, p. 6.
7 George Manuel travel report, August 1973 to July 1974.
8 Doug Sanders interview.
9 Doug Sanders, *The Formation of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples,* p. 8.
10 Speech by George Manuel on Education, August 28, 1973, pp. 3-4.

Chapter 14

1 Cited in *Indian News,* Summer 1975, p. 1.
2 Cited in letter from George Manuel to Judd Buchanan, March 21, 1975.
3 Cited in CP wire service report, Kiruna, Sweden, October 3, 1977.
4 *Maclean's,* March 1975, p. 48.
5 Letter from George Manuel to James Richardson, March 4, 1975.
6 *Canadian News Facts,* May 31, 1975, p. 1391.
7 Ibid., 1392.
8 Minutes of Joint Cabinet/NIB Meeting, December 12, 1975.
9 Cited in letter from George Manuel to the Hon. Judd Buchanan, October 1, 1975, p.2.
10 Text of Clive Linklater's address to Regional Directors' Meeting.
11 Letter from George Manuel to the Right Hon. Pierre Trudeau, October 8, 1975.
12 Warren Allmand interview.
13 Ibid.
14 Minutes of the UBCIC Land Claims Conference, Terrace, British Columbia, April 2, 1975, p. 6.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 *Indian News,* June 1975, p. 5.
18 Bill Wilson interview.
19 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics,* 177.
20 Ibid., 176.

21 Phillip Paul interview.
22 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics,* 179.
23 Bob Manuel interview.
24 Phillip Paul interview.
25 Bob Manuel interview.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Dene Declaration, 1975.
29 Bob Manuel interview.
30 Dene Declaration, 1975.
31 Speech by George Manuel to the Anglican Synod of the Diocese of Niagara, October 3, 1975.

Chapter 15

1 Doug Sanders, *The Formation of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples,* 11.
2 Ibid., 13.
3 Ibid.
4 Dave Monture interview.
5 Ibid.
6 Rodrigo Contreras interview.
7 Ibid.
8 Report by George Manuel to the WCIP, January 1977.
9 Rodrigo Contreras interview.
10 Report by George Manuel to the WCIP, January 1977.
11 Rodrigo Contreras interview.
12 Ibid.
13 Presentation of George Manuel, President of the NIB, to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, April 13, 1976.
14 Presentation of George Manuel, President of the NIB, to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, June 3, 1976.

Chapter 16

1 Manuel and Posluns, *The Fourth World*, p. 265.
2 *London Free Press,* August 14, 1976, p. 31
3 Ibid.
4 Cited in *Indian News,* Vol.17, No.9, 1976, p. 1.
5 Ibid., 2.

6 Phillip Paul interview.
7 Bob Manuel interview.
8 Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs Policy Statement, 1977.
9 Phillip Paul interview.
10 Louise Mandell interview.
11 Millie Poplar interview.
12 Phillip Paul interview.
13 CP report, Kiruna, Sweden, August 25, 1977.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 CP report, Kiruna, Sweden, August 27, 1977.
17 Bill Badcock interview.

Chapter 17

1 Cited in President's Message, *UBCIC News*, December 1978.
2 UBCIC Special Report, January 20, 1978.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Louise Mandell interview.
6 *Vancouver Province*, July 26, 1978, p. 4.
7 *Vancouver Province*, July 27, 1978, p. 1.
8 Ibid.
9 Louise Mandell interview.
10 President's Report, *UBCIC News*, November 8, 1978.
11 Cited in *UBCIC News*, Vol.1, No.5, 1978, p. 9.
12 *UBCIC News*, Spring 1978.
13 *UBCIC News*, May 1978.
14 *Indian News*, February 1971, p. 1.
15 Cited in *Canadian News Facts*, June 1–15, 1978, p. 1959.
16 Walter Rudnicki interview.
17 Bob Manuel interview.
18 *Canadian News Facts*, August 1–31, 1978, p. 1993.
19 Posluns and Manuel, *The Fourth World*, p. 218.
20 President's Annual Report to the UBCIC, 1978–79.
21 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics*, 186.
22 Rosalee Tiyza interview.
23 *UBCIC News*.

24 Ibid.
25 Paul Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics*, 188.
26 Saul Terry interview.
27 Ibid.
28 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics*, 192.
29 Walter Rudnicki interview and Millie Poplar's *George Manuel, an Indian Biography,* UBCIC, 1984.
30 Dave Monture interview.

Chapter 18

1 Cited in the *Montreal Gazette*, May 20, 1980.
2 Ibid., May 5, 1980.
3 Cited in the UBCIC Constitutional Communique, Oct. 16, 1980.
4 *Ottawa Journal*, Mar. 7, 1980, p. 2.
5 *Montreal Gazette*, Aug. 13, 1980, p. 17.
6 Cited in George Manuel's Address to the UBCIC's 13th Annual Assembly, Oct. 1981.
7 Wayne Christian interview.
8 *The Globe and Mail*, Nov. 17, 1980.
9 *Montreal Gazette*, Oct. 22, 1980, p. 7.
10 UBCIC Constitutional Communique, Oct. 11, 1980.
11 Cited in Constitution Report of the UBCIC, Oct. 1981.
12 Ibid.
13 Walter Rudnicki interview.
14 Bob Manuel interview.
15 Doug Sanders interview.
16 *The Globe and Mail*, Nov. 27, 1980.
17 Ibid., Nov. 27, 1980.
18 Ibid., Dec. 8, 1980.
19 Bob Manuel interview.
20 *The Globe and Mail*, Dec. 1, 1980.
21 Ibid., Dec. 2, 1980.
22 Ibid., Dec. 8, 1980.
23 George Manuel's Address to the UBCIC's 13th Annual Assembly, Oct. 1981.
24 Bob Manuel interview.

Chapter 19

1 George Manuel's Address to the UBCIC's 13th Annual Assembly, Oct. 1981.
2 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics*, p. 197.
3 Michael Posluns interview.
4 Millie Poplar, *George Manuel, an Indian Biography*, May 1986, p. 19.
5 George Manuel, "The Mapuche of Chile and the Threat of Law," 2568, p. 14.
6 *Kainai News*, Apr. 1981, p. 1.
7 Rosalee Tiyza interview.
8 Louise Mandell interview.
9 George Manuel's Address to the UBCIC's 13th Annual General Assembly, Oct. 1981.
10 Bob Manuel interview.
11 Ibid.
12 Bella Coola Declaration, UBCIC archives.
13 *The Globe and Mail*, Nov. 24, 1981.

Chapter 20

1 George Manuel's open letter to the Peoples of Canada, 1982.
2 Ibid.
3 George Manuel Jr. interview.
4 Vera Manuel, Eulogy for George Manuel.

Index

Note: page numbers in italics refer to images
Aboriginal Council of British Columbia (ACBC), 241–42
Aboriginal Native Rights Committee (ANRC), 39–42
Aboriginal rights. *See under* Indian rights
Aboriginal Rights Commission, 221
Aboriginal title, 14, 192; extinguishment of, 13, 160, 162, 164–67, 186–87, 213, 215; meaning of, 167; and non-Treaty areas of Canada, 158; unextinguished, 157. *See also* land claims; land question
Aborigines, Australian, 143–44, 180, 202; assimilation of, 143; education of, 143
activist movement, 257; unified, 131; youth, 126, 172, 192-93, 195-96, 223
Adams Lake Reserve, 31, 199
Adolph, Victor, 36, 83, 100, 232
adult education, 69
Africa: connections with, 115, 118, 120, 130; tribalism in, 149
African National Congress (ANC), 168, 251
Ahenikew, David, 104, 121, 218
Ainu people, *226*
Akwesasne Reserve, 172, 262
Alberta: conflict between Indian Nations in, 80; and Constitution, 275; education in, 124–25; Elders in, 157; NIB delegation from, 91, 100, 109; Red Paper, 100–106; school strikes in, 125–27, 145; withdrawal of delegation from NCIRT and NIB, 120–21
alcohol: and murder rate, 37; repealing restrictions on, 38; use of, 21, 29
Alcon, Clemente, 203
Alexander, Ben, 122
Alfonse, Chief Denis, 99
all-Chiefs conference: (1969), 99–100; (1975), 189, 197; (1980), 258, 260–61
Alliance of BC Indians, 222
Allied Tribes of British Columbia, 13–14, 42, 100; collapse of, 27

Allmand, Warren, 182, 190–91
American Indian Movement (AIM), 175–76
Amnesty International, 229
Andras, Robert, 87–90
Andrew, Aleck (GM's uncle), 13
Andrew, Dick (GM's maternal grandfather), 5, 7, 8–9, *10*, 13, 15–16, 25, 42, 118, 149; death of, 22; portrayal of as demon, 17; traditional healing of, 12
Andrew, Harry (GM's uncle), 13
Andrew, Joe (GM's uncle), 13
Andrew, Macreet (GM's maternal grandmother), 9, *10*
Andrew, Maria. *See* Manuel, Maria
Andrew, Mary Lou, 223
Anicinabe Park: occupation of, 176
Anthony, Michael, 29–30
anti-capitalism, 192
anti-colonialism, 82, 168, 192
anti-Indian prejudice, 34
Anti-Slavery Society, 154
Arctic Affairs Department, 56
Argentina: GM in, *242*; WCIP meeting in, 244
armed struggle, 146–47, 171, 173, 233
Assembly of First Nations (AFN), 285; creation of, 276–77
assimilation, 4, 35, 51, 96, 99, 203, 272; of Australian Aborigines, 143; of Māori people, 140; of "southern" Indians, 164
August, Amy, xvi, 62–63
August, Anthony, 47, 54, 63, 78
August, Marlene. *See* Manuel, Marlene
August, Susan, xxv, 195n
Australia: Aborigines in, 143–44, 180, 202; GM's trip to, 139, 143–45; Rhodesian settlers in, 227–28. *See also* Aborigines, Australian
Aylmer (Quebec), 111, 118, 169
Badcock, Bill, xvi, 182, 219, 282
band councils: powers of, 29; redundancy of, 277; strengthening of, 241
Barber, Lloyd, 99
Battle, Robert F., 55, 69–70, 72
B.C. Wildlife Federation, 233

Begin, Menachem, 229
Bégin, Monique, 243
Belgium: European Express in, 273
Bellegarde, Chief Wilfred, 69, 72
Berger, Thomas, 113n, 157, 213–15
Berger Commission, 213–15
Big Bear, Chief, 156–57
Blackfoot Nation, 80; education in, 125–26
Black Panthers, 82, 85, 171
Black Power, 147
Blue Quills Indian School (Alberta), 125–26
BNA Act. *See* Constitution
Bob, Bradley, 233–34
Bolivia, 227; Inca people from, 202
Botswana, 178
Bourassa, Robert, 161, 165
Boys, Jeffery, 89–90
Brandt, Willie, 272
Brazil: GM's trip to, 180–81
Britain: Canada Act (1982), 276; Canadian High Commission in, 267, 273; European Express in, 274; GM's trip to, 154–55; imperialist system of, 140; Labour Party, 274; settlement by, 140
British Columbia: Aboriginal title, 14, 186; all-Chiefs conference, 197; and DIA, 88; effect of Constitution Express on, 276; fishing rights in, 230-34; GM's return to, 216–29; Indian population of, 107, 112, 136, 140; Indian power in, 225; Jim Crow treatment in, 21; land question in, 13, 15, 42, 90, 139, 157–60, 167, 172, 175-76, 212; Native women's activism, 270–71; Nishga land claim, 157–60; organization of Indians in, 32, 38, 40, 42, 47, 51, 53, 73, 99-100, 212, 216-29, 233, 276; political eruptions in, 184–201; rejection of funding in: *see under* UBCIC; shared heritage of Indians in, 47; Social Credit Party, 252; Status vs. non-Status Indians in, 219; TB in, 19; tribal movement in, 149; voting rights in, 28. *See also* Constitution Express; peoples' movement; UBCIC
British Columbia Aboriginal Rights Conference (1983), 276
British Columbia Association of Non-Status Indians (BCANSI), 133, 193, 197, 242; merger of with UBCIC, 196, 219–20, 238; name change to UNN, 239. *See also* United Native Nations (UNN)

British Columbia Indian Advisory Council (BCIAC), 48
British Columbia Indian Federation, 52
British Columbia Nurses' Association, 48
Broadbent, Ed, 260–62
"brown bureaucracy," 193, 241
Buchanan, Judd, 177, 179, 181, 183, 185–86, 189, 190, 194, 199, 200–201
Burnham, Forbes, 170, 180
Calder, Frank, 28, 40, 42, 45, 52; and Nishga land claim, 157–60
Calloway, Cab, 1
Cameron, Louis, 176
Camosun College, 105, 173
Canadian Bill of Rights, 131–33; Indian Act's supremacy over, 133, 236
Canadian Forum, 28
Canadian Indian Youth Council, 72–73
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), 118, 139, 243; criticism of as imperialist, 148; in Tanzania, 146–48
Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), 150, 155
Canadian Law Teachers Association, 182
Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO), 115, 118, 145
Canberra (Australia): WCIP assembly in, 268
Cardinal, Harold, xvi, 72, 77, 78–84, 88, 90, 93–95, 101–4, 106, 107, 109–10, 125–27, 157, 277, 282, 284; and charge of wrongdoing, 127; disagreement with GM over NIB, 118, 120–21, 123, 126; as president of IAA, 79, 127; *The Unjust Society*, 79, 82, 105
Carter, Jimmy, 227
Castilliou, Henry, Jr., 36–38, 44, 54, 55, 87, 112, 139
Castilliou, Judge Henry, 36, 37
Catholicism, 10, 17
Central America: GM's tour of, 207–12; Indians of, 144, 171, 179, 180; WCIP regional organization, 227
Charlie, Bob, 83
Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 236, 249, 253, 283–84; exemption of Indian Act from, 263; Native rights in, 260; notwithstanding clause in, 132. *See also* Constitution
Chase, 7, 10, 21, 78, 122; Board of Trade, 34; GM's final home in, 278
Cherokee Nation, 156
Child Caravan, xxi, xxv, 196n, 251–52

Chile: GM's trip to, 269; Mapuche Indians in, 269; Rhodesian settlers in, 227–28
Chilcotin mickeys, 21, 37
Chinook lingua franca, 10
Choosing a Path, 78, 88–89
Chrétien, Jean, 87–89, 91–92, 93–96, 98, 102, 104, 106, 114, 122, 123, 132, 145–46, 183, 185–86; in Australia and New Zealand, 139–40; and constitutional patriation, 262, 273, 275; and James Bay project, 161, 163, 165; and land claims, 160; move to Treasury Board, 177; and policies on education and economic development, 124–27, 129, 130; White Paper, 92, 93–106, 114, 124, 140
Christian, Wayne, xvi, 251, 259, 274, 275–76, 281
Christianity, 6–7, 214–15
Ciaccia, John, 130, 164–65, 174
"Citizens Plus." *See* Red Paper
civil disobedience, 175, 192, 226, 232, 249
civil rights, 27–29; in United States, 54–55
Clark, Fred, 31–32
Clark, Joe, 243; defeat of in 1980 election, 246
Clavell, James: *Shogun*, 229
Clifton, Robert, 38, 41
Clutesi, George, 203
Coalition of Native Indians, 239
Cold War paranoia, 32
Colombia: Marie Marule's trip to, 170
colonialism, 118, 146–48, 240, 245
Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist), 176
community development (CD), 56–57, 61–77, 80, 84, 117, 124, 174, 178
Concerned Aboriginal Women's Movement, xxi, xxv, 196n, 270–71
Confederacy of the Interior Tribes of British Columbia, 27
Confederation of Native Indians of British Columbia (CNIBC), 71, 76
Constitution: injunction against patriation of, 268; patriation of, 132, 235–38, 246, 247–50, 253, 257, 258, 260, 262–63, 268, 273–76; public hearings on, 253; and role of Britain, 274; veto power in amending of, 268. *See also* Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Constitution Express, xxii, xxv, 196n, 247–63, 283; assessment of, 267; bomb threat on, 256; Code of Conduct for, 253; departure of, 255; effect

of on Constitution, 263; journey of, 255–58; press coverage of, 261
Contreras, Rodrigo, 169–70, 179, 184, 202, 208, 210, 245, 282
Cook, Captain James, 140
Coqualeetza, 62–63, 219–20; Preventoria in, 19–20, 22–23
counterculture, 224
Courchene, Dave, 83, 93, 94, 98, 102, 104, 218
Cowichan, 64–69, 99
Cowichan language, 76
Cree People, 80; education in, 125–26; governmental trustee role toward, 163; hunting and fishing rights of, 162; and James Bay project, 161–67, 170, 174, 186, 240; social disintegration of, 163; withdrawal of from IQA, 163
crime rate, Indian, 188
cross-country caravan (1974), 176
Cuba, 262; revolutionaries in, 85; support from Soviet bloc, 148
cultural development, 117, 178
Cultural Education Training Centre, 175
cultural genocide, 94
cultural identity, 182, 193, 203
Cuthland, Beth, 225
Daniels, Harry, 219, 228, 263
Davis, Bill, 188
Dawood, Newaz, 155
Deacey, Jamie, 116–17, 119, 150, 153, 154
decolonization, 115
Defenders of the Land movement, 285
de Freitas, Sir Geoffrey, 154
Delisle, Chief Andrew, 74, 92, 98–99, 110–11, 117, 120, 163
Deloria, Sam, 203
Deloria, Vine, Jr., vii
Deneault, Sarah, xxv, 195n
Dene people, 213; Declaration of Nationhood, 198–201, 213
Denmark: GM's trip to, 153–54; international Indigenous organization meeting in, 180, 184
Deom, Christine, 84, 116, 134
Department of Indian Affairs (DIA), 3, 15, 32, 38, 46, 55–56, 65, 67–70, 72–73, 75, 77, 79, 82, 87–89, 95, 101, 111, 112–14, 118–19, 122, 124,

128, 132, 177, 183, 189–90, 199, 220, 234, 241, 247, 268, 281; “Black Tower” (Vancouver) occupation, 270–71; budget of, 19–20, 76, 122; and community development, 61–62, 64; delegation to Australia and New Zealand, 139–45; divide-and-conquer strategy, 127; Edmonton sit-in, 126; and education, 125–26, 185-86; Expo Indian Pavilion Advisory Board, 74; funding guidelines, 185, 193; Housing Task Force, 178–79; and medical costs, 30; and modern-day versions of treaties, 160–61; name change to IAND, 87; occupation of Ottawa building, 172–73, 174; paternalism of, 91; rejection of funding from: *see under* UBCIC; withdrawal from agreement with NIB on education, 185–86
Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (IAND), 87; White Paper, 92, 93–106, 114, 124, 140. *See also* Department of Indian Affairs (DIA)
dependence: unilateral vs. mutual, 64
Derrickson, Ron: *Reconciliation Manifesto*, 286; *Unsettling Canada*, 286
Dewar, Marion, 257–58
Diamond, Billy, 163–66
Diefenbaker, John, 4, 38, 96, 101–2
Dieter, Walter, 72–73, 83–84, 91, 94, 97, 116, 218; doubts about NIB leadership of, 98–99; replacement of as NIB leader, 104–6, 107–10
direct action, 249, 251
discrimination, 55, 127–28; against Indigenous women, 90, 133; against Sámi people, 206
Dixon, Julio, 203, 211
Dore, Cecilia, 132
Dorion, Noel, 3–5
Doucette, Noel, 109
Duncan, 64–65, 79
economic development, 94, 117, 121, 177, 179, 183, 188; as NIB policy, 124, 129–31, 135–36
Ecuador: GM’s trip to, 212; Marie Marule’s trip to, 170
education, 21, 57, 101, 109, 117, 121, 125, 160, 182, 188, 193, 194, 230; of Australian Aborigines, 143; community involvement in, 125; of Māori people, 140, 141; as NIB policy, 124–29, 135–36, 185; relative levels of, 148; at residential schools, 17
Elks Club, 34, 41
employment: of Indians, 21, 40, 178; relative levels of, 148

enfranchisement, 14, 28, 38
environmental issues, 150-51, 162, 167, 224
equality, 35, 89, 103, 169, 249
Equal Rights for Indian Women, 132
Eurasia: Indigenous Peoples of, 140. *See also under* Australia; New Zealand
European Express, 267–77
exclusion, 26, 236, 274
Expo (1967): Indian Day, 75; Indians of Canada Pavilion, 74–75; permanent Indian pavilion following, 168
fascism, European, 28
Federal Court of Appeal, 131–33
federal government: and Aboriginal title, 158, 160, 167, 176, 186; funding by, 112–14; obligations of to Indians, 94, 190; transfer of jurisdiction to provinces, 97, 165; trustee role of toward Cree, 163, 166. *See also* Constitution; DIA; Indian rights
federal–provincial tension, 111
Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, 104, 218
Finland: Ninth Nordic Sámi Council conference, 205–7
First World War, 13
Fish Forum (1977), 231
fishing, 64, 224; quotas on, 231; restrictions on, 35, 230–31; rights to, 161–62, 164, 230–35
Fort Kamloops, 6
Fort Qu'Appelle Indian Hospital, 20
Fort Simpson (NWT), 199–200
Fourth World, 150, 152, 199–201, 202–15, 227, 279–80, 283; origin of term, 144; tribalism and, 149
France: European Express in, 273
Fulton, Davie, 47, 192
Geneva (Switzerland): GM's trips to, 155, 205
George, Chief Dan, 33, 36
George, Ron, 242
Germany: European Express in, 273
Gladstone, James, 38, 217
Good, Raymond, 223
Gosnel, James, 62, 158

Gottfriedson, Gus, 36, 39, 83
grassroots, 46, 193, 195; Aboriginal rights among, 224-25; consultation with, 71; funding, 15; GM's ability to inspire, 237; help at level of, 130; Indian communities, 13; involvement and commitment of, 104; politicization of, 168; protest by, 199; Sámi, 207
Great Depression, 27
Greenland, 184; Inuit people from, 202
Gros-Louis, Max, 73
G-7 summit (1981), 270
Guatemala, 179, 202, 207; apartheid regime in, 208; Campesinos Unity Committee (CUE), 209; Canadian aid to, 209; GM's trips to, 208–9, 211, 278–79; Highland Indians in, 208–9, 278–80; Mayan people from, 202, 208–9, 278–80
Guaymi people, 202, 211–12
Guyana: WCIP preparatory meeting in, 170, 180, 184, 203
Gzowski, Peter, 55
Haimila, Wayne, xvi, 262
Hall, Emmett, 158
Harris, Ken, 62
Havrot, Edward, 187–88
health care, 35, 57, 109, 113, 121, 160, 188, 234, 243
Hohepa, Dr. Pat, 141–42
Holyoake, Keith, 142, 145
Homemakers' Club, 41, 43, 62
Horn, Kahn-Tineta, 71
housing, 57, 65–68, 112, 117, 132, 177–78, 183, 193, 230
human rights, 83, 227
hunger, 27; at residential schools, 18
hunting: restrictions on, 35; rights to, 161–62
Hurley, Maisie, 41, 48
Huxley, Aldous, 154
Hydro Quebec, 165–67
Idle No More movement, 285
Inari (Finland): Ninth Nordic Sámi Council conference, 205–7
Inca people, 202
income levels: relative, 148
independence, 76, 130, 133, 182, 195, 213, 225, 234; for Dene, 200-201;

economic, 4, 106, 130, 167, 178, 210; for Nuxalk, 274; political, 4, 106, 178-79, 210
India, 190
Indian Act: abolition of, 35, 45, 93; Aboriginal rights clauses in, 132; alterations to, 56, 62, 101, 188; amendments to (1951), 29; discriminatory section about Native women in, 90, 131–33; exemption of from Charter of Rights, 263; guardianship relationship in, 90; Joint Committee to review, 28; new, 88, 234; and non-Status Indians, 241; notwithstanding clause in, 132; rejection of government agenda to study, 91; renaming of, 45; review of, 70, 248; special status afforded by, 194; supremacy of over Bill of Rights, 133, 236
Indian Affairs. *See under* Department of Indian Affairs (DIA); Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (IAND)
Indian agents, 15, 26–27, 31–32, 38, 63
Indian Association of Alberta (IAA), 38, 77, 79–80, 102, 104, 110; and school strikes, 125–26
Indian Association of Quebec, 92
Indian "central government," 120–21
Indian Child Caravan. *See* Child Caravan
Indian corporations: establishment of, 129
Indian economy: destruction of, 129
Indian-Eskimo Association, 93, 99
Indian Fishing Permit, 230
Indian Food Fishing Licence, 230
Indian fund-raising, 32; restrictions on, 27
Indian identity, 48, 59, 128, 213, 216; extinguishment of, 166
Indian languages: teaching of, 125, 128
Indian militancy, 13, 188, 235, 250
Indian movement: and DIA, 75, 82, 87; and education of non-Native majority, 187; and James Bay, 162; Marxism in, 115; radical youth wing of, 171; role of, 48, 116, 146, 209; role of in NIB, 109; role of in NIC, 46; in tatters, 15
Indian "nations": as equal partners, 160; existence of, 158; sense of, 213
Indianness, 48; Indians' ability to decide on, 133; pride in, 17; shame in, 81
Indian News, 55, 97, 177, 205, 219
Indian organizing: restrictions on, 29, 226
Indian policy, 28; criticism of by GM on international trips, 146–48, 151–

53
"Indian problem," 12–13
Indian resistance, 173; illegality of, 15; passive, 157; spreading gospel of, 3
Indian rights, 27–29, 35–37, 65, 89, 92, 94, 98, 101, 113n, 144, 150, 155, 170, 188, 212–13, 224, 227, 232, 286; acquired, 132; confusion about meaning of, 259; and Constitution, 235–37, 248, 250, 252–53, 258–59, 260, 262–63, 268, 273–75, 283–84; extinguishment of, 160, 162; genocidal approach to, 94, 161, 273, 279; as moral issue, 214; in New Zealand, 141; NIB position paper on, 158–59; provincial role in, 262–63, 268, 275, 284; recognition of, 160; restrictions on, 15, 21, 26; and UN, 228
Indian schools, 124–29; moratorium on transfer of to provincial system, 125; strike in, 125–27. *See also* residential schools
"Indians of Canada Day" (1971), 168
Indians of Quebec Association (IQA), 161, 163
Indian Status, removal of, 14, 28, 38
Indian women: discrimination against, 133; justice for, 131; loss of Status upon marriage to non-Indian, 90, 131–33; MMIWG Report, 286
Indigenous Association of Argentina, 244
Indigenous rights. *See* Indian rights
inequality, 115
integration, 4, 35, 55, 128, 186; of Australian Aborigines, 143; of Māori people, 140
Interior Tribes of British Columbia: Native Rights Committee, 3
International Labour Organization (ILO), 155
International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), 150, 154, 229
Inuit, 56; and constitutional patriation, 262–63; from Greenland, 202; and James Bay project, 161–67
Inuit Tapirisat, 263
Iran, 262
Irish Republican Army (IRA), 226, 273
Iroquois and Allied Tribes, 130–31
Jackson, Ray, 218
jail: disproportionate number of Indians in, 228
James Bay Corporation, 163–65, 174
James Bay Hydroelectric Project, 161–67, 172–73, 174, 186, 188, 213–15,

240; environmental effects of, 162, 167; injunction against, 164
Jamieson, Roberta, xvi, 181–82
Japan: Ainu people from, *226*
Jim Crow treatment, 21
Joe, Abraham, 66
Johnstone, Wally, 231–32
Joint NIB-Cabinet Committee. *See under* NIB
Joint Parliamentary Committee on Indian Affairs (1960), 3–5, 7, 34, 38, 42, 45, 46, 235
Jones, Colonel H.M., 4, 26, 55, 76
Jones, Ray, 222
Jules, Chief Harvey, xx
Jules, Clarence, 107
Jules, Isha, 286
justice system: Native Peoples and, 190, 234
Just Society, Canada as, 160
Kamloops: residential school, 16–17, 100
Karch, Tony, 64–66
kekuli, 5, 25
Kenora (Ontario), 176
Kenya: GM's trip to, 149–50
Kenyata, Jomo, 149
King, Mackenzie, 94
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 155
Kiruna (Sweden): WCIP conference in, 227–28
Kootenay Arrow Lake band, 19
Kroeger, Arthur, 189, 191
Kruger, Jacob, 34, 281
Labillois, Wallace, 70
Labrador: as non-Treaty part of Canada, 158
Laing, Arthur, 67–68, 70, 72, 74–77, 79, 88–89, 92, 114
Lalonde, Marc, 188
land claims, 15, 71, 155, 160-61, 163, 186, 187, 191-92, 213, 215, 241; Nishga, 157-60; research on, 98, 136, 160, 225; by Yukon Indian Brotherhood, 160, 186. *See also* British Columbia; James Bay Hydroelectric Project
land claims commission, 47, 158

land question / land rights, 12–15, 27, 29, 35, 47, 55, 98, 129, 136, 139, 155, 156–70, 172, 187–88, 192, 194, 203, 215, 225, 227, 234, 268; in British Columbia, 139, 157–60, 172, 186, 212; in New Zealand, 141; in NWT, 186; among Sámi people, 151–52; in Yukon, 186. *See also* James Bay Hydroelectric Project
Latin America, 169, 211, 227; Indian Peoples in, 180, 217, 228, 260
Lavallee, Guy, 168–70, 180, 205, 281
Lavell, Jeannette Corbiere, 131–33, 236
Leander, Gun, 151
leftism, 118, 151, 192, 194
Legion of Mary, 33
Lesaux, Peter, 189
liberation, 279; philosophy of, 168; struggle for 105, 210, 238, 286
Lightbown, Bill, 197–98, 238–39
Lillooet, 232–34; powwow in, 47–48
Lima, Constantino, 227–28
Linklater, Clive, 169–70, 181, 189–90, 250
Lopez Hierra, Luis, 207
Lougheed, Peter, 275
Lytton, 270
MacDonald, Flora, 243
MacDonald, James, 150, 153, 155
MacDonald, John, 96
MacGregor, Roy, 164
Mackenzie Valley pipeline, 213–15
Maclean's, 79
Macphail, Agnes, 19
Maitland, Herbert, 100
Malaysia: Malay people in, 103
Malloway, Chief Richard, 62
Malouf, Justice Albert, 163–64, 214
Mandela, Nelson, 62
Mandell, Louise, xvi, 224, 230, 232, 251, 271
Manitoba: Indians in, 45
Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, 83, 99, 104
Maniwaki Reserve, 135
Manuel, Annie (GM's daughter), 23; death of, 23

Manuel, Ara (GM's son), xxvi, 229
Manuel, Arlene (GM's daughter), xxii–xxiii, xxvi, 25, *57*, *68*
Manuel, Arnold (GM's son), 25; death of, 25
Manuel, Arthur (GM's son), xv, xviii, xix, xxi, xxii–xxvi, 25, 30, 49, 50n, 54, *57*, 84–86, 171, 285, 286; and DIA occupation, 172–73, 174; as NYA president, 171; *Reconciliation Manifesto*, xxvi, 286; *Unsettling Canada*, xxvi, 286
Manuel, Beverly (GM's daughter-in-law), xv, xix
Manuel, Bob (GM's son), xv–xvi, xviii, xxi, xxii–xxvi, 25, 29, 50–52, 84–85, 105–6, 171, 173, 192, 195n, 196–97, 200, 237, 247, 270n, 272, 277, 281; as band Chief, 123, 222, 251, 278, 281; campaign for NIB leadership, 249–50, 257; and Constitution Express, 254, 258–59; disagreement with GM, 281–82; and European Express, 273–74; job at DIA, 174; marital troubles of, 173; and planned Rideau Hall sit-in, 260; politics as full-time occupation for, 222; and UBCIC executive, 198–99, 219–20, 222; as UBCIC president, 273, 277
Manuel, Doreen (GM's daughter), xv, xviii, xx–xxvi, 25, *26*, *57*, *68*; footnotes by, 9, 50, 195–96
Manuel, George: as Advisory Board chair, 69–70, 283; in Alberta, 80–81, 83–84; as all-Chiefs conference chair, 100; birth of, 7, 9; childhood of, 8–18, 19–20; death of, 282; declaration of national constitutional emergency, 252; disagreement with Bob, 281–82; drinking sprees of, 135–36; estrangement from children, 49; fear of nepotism, 174; *The Fourth World*, 145, 156; funeral of, 282; as Grand Chief, 280; health issues of, 208, 211; heart problems of, 183, 200, 255, 258, 267, 269, 279; honorary degree from UBC, 280; hospitalization of, 258–63, 267; income of, 43, 278, 281; as "Indian socialist," 149; joining NB, 53; legacy of, 278, 283–84; legal challenge to constitutional patriation, 250–51; mastoiditis, 18; mental sharpness of, 281; and money, 118; as NIAB chair, 56; as NIB leader, 92, 104–6, 107–23, 135, 181; as Neskonlith band chief, 47, 52, 282; as Neskonlith band councillor, 52, 281; as NIC Sachem, 46–47; Nobel Peace Prize nominations, 229; offer of safe parliamentary seats, 217; as organizing chair of WCIP, 184; poverty and illness in final years, 278; as president of NAIB, 42, 45, 47, 52; public speaking skills, 34; Order of Canada, 280; osteomyelitis, 18; raised by grandparents, 9–10; reaction to constitutional deal, 263, 267; refusal of Senate seat, 278; on Regional Council, 62; relationship with mother, 9;

relationship with Sofe Maria, xxvi, 229; residential school experience, 17–18, 50n; resignation from NAIB presidency, 53; retirement from NIB, 212, 214, 217–19; retirement from UBCIC, 272; rumours of Marxism, 32; rumours of running for Parliament, 229; salary at NIB, 216–17; separation from Marceline, 49, 51–52, 173; as "Shogun," 137, 229; speculation about personal life, 229; strokes, 269–70, 277; supposed lack of sophistication of, 192–93; tension with Marceline, 43–44, 50; tuberculosis, 18, 19–20; as UBCIC president, 221–26, 272; as War Chief, 226, 263, 282; as WCIP ambassador-at-large, 267, 278–79; as WCIP president, 203, 269; wheelchair use, 277, 280–81; work at lumber mill, 24–25, 33, 47, 50; writing skills, 34
Manuel, George, Jr. (GM's son), xxvi, 171, 280, 281
Manuel, Ida (GM's daughter), xxvi, 281
Manuel, Joe (GM's half-brother), 32–33, 78, 122–23, 172; as band Chief, 123
Manuel, Kanahus (GM's granddaughter), xix, 285–87
Manuel, Louis (GM's stepfather), 9, 11, 24, 32
Manuel (née Paul), Marceline (GM's first wife), xx–xxii, xxvi, 22–26, 30, *41*, 52, 57, 62–63, 86, 251, 270–71; separation from GM, 49, 51–52, 173; tension with GM, 43–44, 50
Manuel (née Andrew), Maria (GM's mother), xxiv, 9, 11, 22, 24, 32, 81; death of, 86
Manuel (née August), Marlene (GM's second wife), xxvi, 78–79, 84, 86, 111, 119, 135, 171, 183, 218, 219, 229, 281
Manuel, Martha (GM's daughter), xxvi, 84
Manuel, Mayuk (GM's granddaughter), xix, 286
Manuel, Minnie (GM's half-sister-in-law), 78
Manuel, Pierre Rainbow (GM's father), xxiv, 8–9
Manuel, Richard (GM's adopted son), xxii–xxvi, 50, *57*, *68*
Manuel, Ska7cis (GM's grandson), xix
Manuel, Snutekwe (GM's granddaughter), xix, 286
Manuel, Tessie (GM's sister), xxiv, 9n
Manuel, Vera (GM's daughter), xviii, xxi, xxiv–xxvi, 25, 44, 50n, *68*, 270; eulogy for father, 282
"Manuelistas," xxvi, 223, 270
Māori people, 103, 139–42, 144, 180, 202; assimilation of, 140; dissolution of status and special rights of, 140; education of, 140, 141; integration of,

140; and land issues, 141; preservation of ancient culture of, 141; rights of, 141; seats reserved for in parliament, 141–42
Mapuche Indians, 269
Marchand, Len, 39–40, 55, 72, 87, 95, 139–40, 158, 160, 162, 217, 282
Maritimes: Aboriginal title in, 13; Indian population of, 112
Marule, Jacob, 115, 118, 168, 251
Marule, Marie Smallface, xvi, 115–18, 133–34, 142, 145, 150, 169–70, 174, 180, 184–85, 188, 223, 244; departure from NIB, 215
Marxism, 115
Mathias, Joe, 242
Mayan people, 202, 208–9, 278–80; lack of word for "conquest," 279
Mazankowski, Don, 82
McCarthy, Grace, 252
medical costs: refusal to pay, 30, 31–32, 34–35
Métis Council of Canada, 82
Métis people, 46, 194, 219; and constitutional patriation, 262–63
Mexico: Centre for Popular Organization, 207; Chiapas Indians in, 279; GM's trips to, 207–8, 211, 279–80; Indian rights in, 228
Milando, Mbuto, 119, 144; origin of term "Fourth World," 144
militancy, 170-72; Indian, 13, 188, 235, 250
Miskito people, 202, 209–10
MMIWG Report, 286
Modeste, Wes, 65–66
Mohawk people, 163
Monture, Dave, xvi, 97, 103, 137, 163–64, 205, 236, 244–45, 262, 282
Monture, Dr. Gilbert, 74, 97
Morales, Jose Carlos, 269
Moses, Don, 99–100, 136, 197, 222
Mother Teresa, 229
Mount Currie band, 270
Munro, John, 248, 252, 258, 260, 268–69
murder rate, 37
Mussell, Bill, 87, 140
Mussell, Genevieve, 3–4, 36, 39, 87
Narcisse, Nora, xxv, 195n
Nass Valley, 157
National Committee on Indian Rights and Treaties (NCIRT), 91–92, 98–99,

110–11, 113, 117; withdrawal of Alberta delegation from, 120
National Conference on Native Peoples and the Criminal Justice System, 190
National Congress of American Indians, 180
National Indian Advisory Board (NIAB), 56, 62, 69–70, 72–74, 79–80, 82, 109, 114, 283; British Columbia–Yukon regional council, 62
National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), 83, 86–87, 91, 94, 96–97, 99, 132, 156, 158, 204, 208, 236–37, 247, 251, 261, 280; and Aboriginal Rights Position Paper, 231; agreement with DIA on education, 185–86; assembly (August 1970), 107–10; Bob Manuel working at, 174; closure of Winnipeg office, 110; constitution of, 97; and constitutional patriation, 262–63; debt of, 110–11; displeasure of with Constitution Express, 257; economic development brief, 129–30; fear of domination of, 112; Fredericton assembly (1978), 237; GM as president of, 107–23, 135, 181, 283; GM's retirement from, 212, 214, 217–19; "Indian Control of Indian Education" brief, 128–29, 183; on international stage, 139–55; and James Bay project, 163; Joint NIB-Cabinet Committee, 111, 127, *175*, 177, 188–89; leadership contest (1980), 249–50; Montebello consultations, 122; as "national spokesman," 97–98; and "national unity," 121; new headquarters in Ottawa, 110–11, 115–17; new policy areas of, 124–36; NGO status at UN, 155, 179–80; Ottawa meeting with Trudeau (1970), 101–3; potential of to win international respect for Native cause, 145; pressure on to withdraw support for Chrétien package, 267–68; progress made by, 218; and PTOs, 109, 120–22; relationship of with government, 111–13, 119; restructuring/renaming of, 276; role of, 112, 120; secretariat to organize international peoples' conference, 184; split from western/Maritime radicals, 248; treatment of by DIA as "third/enemy force," 190; Whitehorse assembly (September 1976), 215, 218; Winnipeg meeting (1969), 96–98, 205; withdrawal of Alberta delegation from, 120–21. *See also* provincial-territorial organizations (PTOs)
National Indian Council (NIC), 45–47, 53, 71–72, 74, 82, 83; constitution of, 46
National Indian Educational Authority, 128
national Indian philosophy, 124–36, 148, 156, 174, 231
"Nation-to-Nation" talks, 29
Native Brotherhood (NB), 27–28, 35–36, 40–41, 47, 49, 53–54, 57, 62, 73, 197, 221–22, 231, 239–41; rivalry with NAIB, 38–39, 42, 48

Native Council of Canada (NCC), 82, 219, 239, 263
Native Indian Law Students' Association, 181–82
Native Voice, 47–48, 52–53, 71
Native Youth Association (NYA), 171–73
Neskonlith, 6, 8–9, 13, 21–22, 24, 27, 47, 111, 122, 135, 183, 195n, 197, 251, 270
New Democratic Party (NDP), 274–75
New Zealand, 184; Canadian High Commission in, 141; electoral system in, 141–42; GM's trip to, 139–42, *143*, 145; Māori Council, 141; Māori people in, 103, 139–42, 144, 180, 202; meeting with minister of Māori and Island Affairs, 140. *See also* Māori people
NGOs (non-governmental organizations), 118, 150, 153, 169; and UN, 155, 179-80, 205
Nicaragua, 202; GM's trip to, 209–11, 212; Miskito people from, 202, 209–10
Nicholas, Sandra Lovelace, 133
Nillas-Valkepaa, *206*
Nishga land claim, 157–60
Nishga Tribal Council, 40, 47, 53, 62
Nobel Peace Prize, 229
non-Status Indians, 45; new national organization for, 82; in UNN, 241; vs. Status Indians, 193–94, 239
non-Treaty areas of Canada, 158, 160
North American Indian Brotherhood (NAIB), 27–28, 34, 36, 38, 45–46, 53–54, 62, 69, 71–72, 79, 87, 139, 225, 280; Convention (1959), 31, 40–42, 47; Convention (1963), 52; fund-raising for, 43–44; Interior Branch, 36; new version of, 42; rivalry with NB, 38–39, 42, 48
Northwest Territories: federal government negotiations with Indians of, 167; as non-Treaty part of Canada, 158
Northwest Territories Indian Brotherhood, 191, 198; Fort Simpson Assembly, 199–200
Norway, 184, 243–44
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, 128
Nuu-Chah-Nulth Reserve (Port Alberni), 184, 202–3
Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council, 239
Nuxalk people, 275
Nyerere, Julius, 62, 119, 146, *147*, 148–49; leadership-by-example

approach of, 148–49
Oblate missionaries, 6
Oblate order, 17
oil companies, 214, 224
Ojibway Warrior Society, 176
Ontario: Aboriginal title in, 13; Indian population of, 112; non-Indian people of, 160; and White Paper, 97
Ontario Native Women's Association, 219
oral history, 225
O'Reilly, James, 163–64
Panama, 202; GM's trip to, 211–12; Guaymi people from, 202, 211–12; National Association of Indigenous Peoples of Panama, 211; WCIP conference in, 227
Pape, Art, 224
Pape, Maxine, 224n
Paraguay, 179
Parti Québécois, 248
paternalism, 114
Patrick, Archie, 222
Paul, Ben, 54
Paul, Marceline. *See* Manuel, Marceline
Paul, Phillip, xvi, 62, 70–73, 75, 83, 89–90, 99–100, 104–6, 116, 121–22, 160, 173, 194–97, 212–13, 219–20, 222, 226, 233, 272–73
Paull, Andy, 12, 13–14, 27–30, 32, 34–39, 41, 49, 62, 122, 193; death of, 42–43
Paulsen, Paul, 33–34
Pearson, Lester B., 56, 101–2
Peltier, Leonard, xxi
"peoples' movement," 174, 196, 217, 223, 226–27, 230–46, 249–50, 278
Perrault, Ray, 270
Peru: GM's trip to, 244–45
Peters, Omer, 83, 109–10, 115, 181
Peters, Peter Dennis, 232
Pickersgill, Jack, 35, 38, 89
Pierrish, Christine (GM's great-aunt), 13
Pierrish, François (GM's great-uncle), 13, 47
Pierrish, Mary. *See* Thomas, Mary

Pierrish, William (GM's great-uncle), 12–13, 47; visit to London (1926), 14, 274
Pinder, Leslie, 224
Pinochet, Augusto, 269
Plain, Fred, 109–10
Point, Steve, 198–99, 219–20, 222
police: harassment by, 4; injustices by courts and, 190
Polynesia: peoples of, 142
Pootlas, Archie, 259, 275
Poplar, Millie, xvi, 223
Port Alberni: meeting of WCIP, 184, 201, 202–4, 227
Posluns, Michael, 145; *The Fourth World*, 145, 156
Potlatch ceremonies: restrictions on, 29
poverty, 51, 87, 101, 115, 132, 164, 177, 190, 245, 278
Prince Albert (Saskatchewan), 190
Prince Edward Island, 113, 234; non-Indian people of, 160
Privy Council (London), 13
Privy Council Office (Ottawa): funding from, 113, 115, 118, 121
Progressive Native Tribes of British Columbia, 27
provincial and territorial organizations (PTOs), 83, 97, 107, 109, 111–14, 120–22, 133–34
Quebec: Court of Appeals, 164; French majority in, 160; Front de libération du Québec, 82; Indian population of, 112; James Bay Development Corporation Act, 161; James Bay project in, 161–67, 174, 186, 188; as non-Treaty part of Canada, 158; Quiet Revolution, 43; referendum on secession, 248; and White Paper, 97
Quimopohian (Rainbow) (GM's paternal grandfather), 8
racism, 21, 25, 28, 37, 56, 76, 114, 187-88, 191
radicalism, 63, 76, 115, 175, 225, 234, 251; leftist, 194; youth, 171, 176–77, 192
radicalization, 217; community-level, 131
rail blockades, 192
RCMP, 61, 82, 172–73, 176, 190, 230, 256
Red Paper, 100–106, 111, 113, 124, 127, 139
Red Power, 171–83, 188, 255
Regina: international Indigenous Peoples conference (1982), 278–79
Regional Councils, 73

reserves: division of, 35; economic development for, 94; as “glorified concentration camps,” 5; gutting of system of, 88–89, 96; housing on, 178; living conditions on, 67; moving people out of, 4; privatization of, 46; as remnants of national territories, 5; schools on, 125, 127; strain on land base of, 40
residential schools, 16–18, 22, 40, 44, 50n, 63; abuse at, 17, 22, 44; academic instruction at, 17; hunger at, 18; illness at, 18; violence at, 44
Rhodesia, 217; apartheid government in, 227–28; white settlers from, 227–28
Richardson, James, 187–88
Rideau Hall: planned sit-in at, 254, 259–60
Riel, Louis, 133
Riley, Del, 250, 257, 258, 260–61, 263, 268, 269
road blockades, 175, 192
Robertson, Gordon, 56
Royal Proclamation (1763), 158
Rudnicki, Walter, xvi, 55–56, 61, 70, 236, 254
rural development: bottom-up philosophy of in Tanzania, 149
Russell Tribunal, 260
Sadat, Anwar, 229
Saddle Lake Reserve (Alberta), 125–26
Sainte-Marie, Buffy, 271
Sámi people, 180, 202, 205–7, 227, 229; GM’s trip to, 150–52; leadership of, 206–7; Ninth Nordic Sámi Council conference, 205–7; WCIP conference in Kiruna, 227–28
Sanders, Doug, xvi, 107, 113, 131–32, 158, *159*, 160, 180, 196, 221, 227, 236, 243, 244, 256–57; *Native Rights in Canada*, 113n
Sappier, Harold, 83
Sara, Nils, 203
Saskatchewan: all-Chiefs conference, 189; NDP government in, 260
Saskatchewan Anti-Tuberculosis League, 20
Saturday Night, 28
school boards, Indian-controlled, 55
school dropouts, 175
Schreyer, Ed, 97; as Governor General, 253–54, 259; petition to, 253–54, 259–60
Scotchman, Jimmy, 36, 39

Scott, Duncan Campbell, 12, 15, 35, 92
Scow, Alfred, 35
Scow, Chief William, 49
Second World War, 22, 27
Secwepemc people, 285–87. *See also* Shuswap Nation
self-determination, 201, 235
self-education, 8
self-government, 55, 131, 150, 160, 174, 200, 225, 231, 234, 268, 281, 284
"self-supporting nations," 4
Shackleton, Ron, 116, 127, 134, 146–47, 181–82, 185
Sharp, Mitchell, 87
Shuswap language, 10, 182; replacement of by English, 16
Shuswap Maple Leafs, 32
Shuswap Nation, 5–7, 22, 27, 182, 276, 279; cultural society, 54; Elders, 8; legends of, 8; religion and customs of, 6, 10; reorganization of, 277
Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, 277
Silverheels, Jay, 36
Sisters of Saint Anne, 17
Skeechestn, 8
Skeena, 38
Small Legs, Nelson, Jr., 271
Small Legs, Nelson, Sr., 271
smallpox, 6, 7, 19, 243, 279
social development, 117, 165, 222
socialism: in Tanzania, 118, 146-47, 149, 177
social justice, 203, 209
social problems, 69
social rights, 15
social services, 4, 97, 186, 193-95, 234, 251
social welfare, 46, 76
Society of Friends, 154
South America: Indians of, 6, 144, 179
South Pacific: peoples of, 142
South Vancouver Island Tribal Federation, 62, 76
sovereignty, 76, 173, 182, 213, 235, 284
Spallumcheen Band, 251–52; Child Caravan, 251–52; removal of Indian children from, 251

Standing Committee on Indian Affairs, 125
Starblanket, Noel, 218, 236–37, 248, 249
Status Indians: new national organization for, 82–83; vs. non-Status Indians, 193–94, 239; Walchli and, 268
Stevenson, Winona, 225
Stockholm (Sweden): U.N. Conference on the Human Environment (1972), 150–52
storytelling, 8, 11
St. Regis Reserve, 130–31
Strong, Maurice, 153
struggle: Indian, 28, 34, 36, 43, 55, 81-84, 105, 115, 119, 122, 133, 144, 149, 175, 179, 182, 192, 203, 210, 218, 225, 261, 270, 283; internationalization of, 139, 144, 153, 212; legacy of, 284-86; legitimacy of, 167 strategies of, 131
Supreme Court of Canada, 132–33
Survival International, 150, 154
Sweden, 184; GM's trip to, 150–52; WCIP conference in, 227–28
Sydney (Nova Scotia): Eighth Annual School Committee Conference of Indian Teachers, 127–28
Tanzania, 262; Canadian High Commission in, 146, 148; GM's trip to, 119, 139, 145–49, 173; rural development in, 149
Tennant, Paul, 40–41, 100n, 184, 193–95, 239, 241–42
Terrace Land Claims Conference, 191–92
Terry, Saul, 241, 262, 272–73, 277, 281
Thatcher, Ross, 82
Thomas (née Pierrish), Mary (GM's cousin), xvi, 11, 16, 17, 22, 29, 34, 44, 45, 51
Tiny House Warrior community, 285
Tiyza, Clara, 62, 223
Tiyza, Rosalee, xvi, 223, 270–71, 284
Toastmasters Club, 34
Toombs, Farrel, 61, 63–64
traditional culture and beliefs: preservation of, 141, 142; teaching of, 128–29
Trail of Tears, 156
Tranquille, 22
transfer payments, 113

Trans Mountain pipeline, 285–87
trauma, childhood, 50n
treaties: abrogation of, 94; modern-day versions of, 160; as peace treaties between nations, 157; validity of, 74
Treaty Rights, 92, 94, 98, 101, 152, 156, 188, 218, 236–37, 268, 273, 275
Treloar, James, 30
Tribal Councils, 277
tribalism, 149
Trudeau, Pierre, 87, 92, 94, 101–3, 111, 113, 132, 139, 158–60, *175*, 188, 190, 268; defeat of in 1979 election, 243; and patriation of Constitution, 235–38, 248–50, 253, 258–60, 262, 273–76; re-election of, 246; "A Time for Action," 236
tuberculosis (TB), 19–20, 40; bacille Calmette-Guerin (BCG) vaccination, 20
Twin, Walter, 217
UBCIC News, 240
underground organization, 226, 233
UNESCO, 82
Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), 100, 104, 121, 136, 156, 173, 181, 184, 192, 241, 277, 280–81; Aboriginal Rights Position Paper, 231, 235, 247, 251; budget of, 223; Chilliwack assembly (1975), 194, 196, 199, 219–21, 222, 225, 239, 241; and constitutional issues, 237, 238, 242, 267, 275; Courtenay conference (1976), 219–20; crisis in, 183, 192–201; debt of, 276; and fishing, 230; funding of, 268; GM's leadership of, 221–26, 272; GM's retirement from, 272; Land Claims Conference (Terrace), 191–92; Legal Fish Committee, 232; merger of with BCANSI, 196, 219–20, 238; Penticton assembly (1978), 234–35, 238; Prince George conference (1976), 221–23; rebuilding of, 212, 219–21, 223–26; rejection of DIA funding by, 194-95, 199, 219, 221, 225, 228, 239, 241; Vancouver assembly (1980), 252–53; vs. B.C. Wildlife Federation, 233
Union of Ontario Indians, 109–10, 217, 250
United Nations, 82, 139; Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 286; condemnation of Canada by, 286; Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972), 150–52; continuation of Constitution Express to, 257, 258–59, 262; Decolonization Committee, 262; Food and Agriculture Organization, 82; Human Rights Commission,

133; Indigenous rights at, 228; NGO conference, 205; NGO observer status at, 155, 179–80; Non-Aligned Nations, 262; WCIP affiliation with, 203–5, 283
United Native Nations (UNN), 239–42; non-Status Indians in, 241
United States, 184, 202; American Indian struggle in, 82, 94, 144; Black movement, 55, 81; Civil Rights movement, 54–55; Red Power movement in, 85; refusal to fund American WCIP chapter, 228
University of British Columbia (UBC), 280
Vancouver Indian Centre, 87
Victoria Colonist, 65
violence, 44, 50; in fight for sovereignty, 173, 175, 188, 232–33; politics of, 192; revolutionary, 209–10
voting rights, 28, 38
Vuolab, Kerttu, *206*
Wah-Shee, James, 191
Walchli, Fred, 239, 241, 268, 270–71, 272
Walkem, Bill, 36, 39
Walkem, Forrest, 36
Watene, Neil, 203
Watt, Charlie, 163–64, 166, 217, 263
Watts, George, 195, 197, 239–42
White Paper, 92, 93–106, 114, 124, 140
white supremacy, 191, 228
Wikwemikong Band, 131
Willard, Joyce, 269
Williams, Guy, 38, 41–42, 52–53, 57, 83, 217
Wilson, Bill, xvi, 192–93, 195–99, 219–20, 238, 276; and UNN, 238–43; withdrawal of from UBCIC, 220
World Council of Churches, 155, 185, 205
World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP), 208, 227–29, 243–44, 249, 269, 278, 280, 283, 286; American chapter of, 228; conference planning, 150, 152, 154, 155, 168–70, 179, 183, 184, 199; Declaration, 202; draft charter of, 203; financing of, 204–5; founding executive of, 203; GM resigning presidency of, 269; goals of, 209; government funding of, 243; international solidarity network, 204; matching of funding by Scandinavian countries, 244; naming of, 185; planning for, 144, 168, 170, 180, 184; Port Alberni founding meeting, 184, 200–201, 202–4, 227;

raising profile of, 207; Solemn Declaration, 203–4; UN affiliation, 203–5
World Health Organization, 82
Wounded Knee, 176
Wuttunee, William, 46, 52–53, 71, 96; *Ruffled Feathers*, 96
X, Malcolm, 85
Young, Chief Gordon, 126–27
Young, Marion, 116
youth: in Indian movement, 171–73, 176–77, 188, 192, 195
Yugoslavia, 262
Yukon: federal government negotiations with Indians of, 167; as non-Treaty part of Canada, 158
Yukon Indian Brotherhood, 160; and land claim, 186, 188; "no Aboriginal rights extinguishment policy," 186–87
Zambia, 115

Copyright

Brotherhood to Nationhood
© 2020 Peter McFarlane with Doreen Manuel

This revised edition first published in 2020 by
Between the Lines
401 Richmond Street West
Studio 281
Toronto, Ontario M5V 3A8
Canada
1-800-718-7201
www.btlbooks.com

First edition published in 1993 by Between the Lines, Toronto.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be photocopied, reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording, or otherwise, without the written permission of Between the Lines, or (for copying in Canada only) Access Copyright, 69 Yonge Street, Suite 1100, Toronto, ON M5E 1K3.

Every reasonable effort has been made to identify copyright holders. Between the Lines would be pleased to have any errors or omissions brought to its attention.

Cataloguing in Publication information available from Library and Archives Canada
ISBN 9781771135108

Epub ISBN 9781771135115

Copy editing by Rhonda Kronyk
Cover illustration by Tania Willard
Designed by DEEVE
Printed in Canada

We acknowledge for their financial support of our publishing activities: the Government of Canada; the Canada Council for the Arts; and the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Book Publishers Tax Credit program, and Ontario Creates.